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ABSTRACT

The Florida Merit Schools Program is described and evaluated in this report. Program goals were to increase student academic performance and to provide economic incentives to school staffs. Research phases involved: document analysis of school district plans submitted to the state Department of Education; interviews with school personnel from five districts; mailed questionnaires to teachers, principals, and other administrators; and a stakeholders' conference. The results are presented in two sections: a descriptive and impact analysis. Findings indicate that the program is generally viewed as having a positive impact on instructional practices. Its effect is greatest in districts that award merit school dollars to purchase materials and equipment only, and the least effect in those that award salary supplements. The relationship between merit school winners and improved student achievement is unknown, due to the use of standardized achievement test scores. Recommendations are made for increased school autonomy in determining optional criteria and for the distribution of award money in forms other than salary supplements. Appendices include the interview guide, mailed questionnaire, conference program and participants, correspondence, examples of statistical models, survey results, attitude index analysis, and socioeconomic school data. (LMI)

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EVALUATION OF THE MERIT SCHOOLS PROGRAM

FINAL REPORT

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University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

June, 1990

EA 022 332

FINAL REPORT
Project No. 89-044
From July 1, 1989 to June 30, 1990

EVALUATION OF THE MERIT SCHOOLS PROGRAM

University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

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June, 1990

This report was prepared with funding from the Service Through the Application of Research (STAR) Program. Contractors undertaking such projects freely expressed their professional judgements in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent the official position or policy of any office of the Florida State Government.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. RFP Research Questions:

a. In what ways is the program acting as an incentive to improve instructional practices?

The program is generally viewed as having a positive impact on the improvement of instructional practices. This impact is greatest in those districts that award merit school dollars to purchase materials and equipment only, and least in those districts (with the exception of Dade County) that award salary supplements. (pp [illegible]-59)

[illegible] there a relationship between improved student achievement and Merit School winners?

There is probably no relationship, but this question can not be clearly answered. The difficult lies in the definition of student achievement. The program defines it in terms of standardized achievement test scores, interpreted according to a statistical model devised by each district. Since it is impossible to ascertain whether student achievement is improving by examining the results of the standardized test scores, this question can not be answered. (pp.51-57)

b. What types of schools win? Is there a disproportionate number of upper socioeconomic level schools which have received the awards over the years? Are there other school characteristics common to Merit School winners?

No, a disproportionate number of upper socioeconomic level schools have not won merit school status. In those districts in which a high percentage of schools receive merit school status each year, socioeconomic status has no bearing on the program. In some larger districts there is a very weak relationship between SES, as measured by free and reduced lunch data, and merit schools. In terms of other characteristics, the percentage of minority students has only a weak relationship with merit school status in some districts. (pp.48-51)

c. What has been the impact of this program on personnel practices? Has there been an incentive as a result of funding for teachers to transfer to Merit Schools, thus depleting the ranks of better teachers at other schools?

There has been very little impact of the program on personnel practices such as teacher transfers. Only in Dade County might there be a weak relationship between teacher transfer and merit school status.(pp.65)

d. How do schools spend the award money? What proportion goes to teachers, administrators and support staff, and what part goes into instructional materials and other areas?

Approximately 17 of the participating districts in 1987-88 spent most of the award money in the form of salary supplements, while the other 12 distributed most of it to purchase materials and equipment. These figures are only approximate, as several award patterns were discovered. The distribution of award money proved to be a key factor in explaining the impact of the program. (pp 30-33).

e. How do the various district plans for Merit Schools differ and how are they similar?

In terms of the statistical models chosen by the 29 participating districts in 1987-88, all models were unique. Very few districts adopted any of the suggested models found in the annual memorandum from DOE announcing the program. In terms of the optional criteria, 18 districts adopted criteria that were fixed by the district; 2 districts adopted competitive criteria, while 9 districts allowed some degree of discretion by the individual school building in the choice of criteria.(pp 12-27)

f. What percentage of the schools in participating districts have received Merit School dollars?

Over the five years of the program, the percentage has varied from 0 to 100%. In the 1987-88 year, 9 districts awarded from 71-100% of their schools as merit schools; 10 districts awarded 36-70%; and 9 districts awarded from 14 to 36%.(pp. 27-33)

g. How have criteria established for Merit schools changed over the years?

In most districts, the criteria have changed very little over time. One reason why this is true is that participation over time has been mixed, as only 15 districts participated in all 4 years of the program (1984-88); 4 have participated in 3 years; 13 have participated in only 2 years, and 10 participated only 1 year. Another indicator is that percentage of merit schools awarded has remained consistent over time for most districts.(pp 27-33)

h. How are Merit Schools measuring and documenting the achievement of their goals?

For the standardized achievement test score part of the program, the scores are determined by the district office and reported to the schools. For the optional criteria, individual schools are reporting achievement of these goals to the district. Schools are required to maintain documentation, but districts rarely if ever ask schools to produce this documentation. (p. 33)

II. Other Relevant Impacts of the Merit School Program:

1. Perception of the program does not differ significantly according to school level (elementary, middle/junior high school, high school). Perceptions do differ significantly across three categories of districts differentiated by the primary method of awarding merit money: 1) salary supplements; 2) instructional materials and equipment; and 3) Dade county (salary supplement). (pp. 41-45)

2. The Overall impact of the program is generally viewed as positive, with school administrators more positive than teachers, and educators from materials only districts more positive than those from salary supplement districts. (pp. 45-48)

3. A majority of teachers and administrators in the materials only districts and in Dade agreed that the program has had a positive impact on instructional practices, while the salary supplement schools are much less in agreement. (pp. 57-59)

4. The program is perceived to have a very positive impact on school based management practices in all districts. (pp. 59-62)

5. In terms of providing an adequate economic incentive for teachers, the program is perceived negatively in salary supplement districts, where for the most part the amount of salary supplement is low. The program is providing a positive economic incentive in the materials only districts. (pp. 62-63)

6. The major deficiency of the program has been the lack of a formal opportunity for districts to share and discuss strategies, problems and successes. (pp.65-68)

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ASSESSMENT OF THE MERIT SCHOOLS PROGRAM: PROJECT ACTIVITIES--FINAL REPORT

The goals of the Florida District Quality Incentives Program, better known as the Merit Schools Program, are (1) to increase the performance of public school students; and (2) to provide economic incentives to instructional and other authorized personnel. In order to more specifically address these goals, the STAR grant RFP identified several specific questions. These questions can be categorized into two groups: 1) the nature of the processes associated with the program and program characteristics; and 2) the impacts of the program.

This first section of the final report provides a description of the activities undertaken as part of this STAR Grant project, with an explanation for any activities that represent a change from the original proposal. Overall, the schedule identified in our response to the RFP has been met.

Phase One: Research Refinement July - October, 1989

The major task of phase one was an intensive review of data found in the records collected by the Florida Department of Education. These records consisted of 1) the plans submitted by each district for the year 1988-89, and 2) the year end fiscal reports submitted by all districts for the entire five year period of the program. We met with DOE personnel on July 25, speaking

with Dorothy Routh, John Winn, Brian Curry, Janice Smith-Dann, Rufus Ellis and Janine Blomberg. The major refinements to our original proposal that resulted from our discussions included the following. First, we agreed that data would not be obtained from districts that chose not to participate in the program.

We visited Senator Jack Gordon in Miami Beach on August 16 to obtain his views on the merit school program. As the author of the merit school legislation, his comments were very helpful in gaining additional insights into the goals and objectives of the program.

Second, it became apparent from discussions, and confirmed from subsequent analysis of district plans, that a review of plans for all districts for all five years would not be preferable. Instead, it was decided that an intensive review of the plans for the year 1988-89 would furnish a view of the full range of plan content possible under the programmatic guidelines. Plan content for any given district has not varied much from year to year. In addition, only 14 districts have participated for all five years. Some initial assessment of plans was made in DOE offices on July 25-26 . Copies of all plans for 1988-89 were furnished by DOE and a much more intensive analysis was performed in the weeks following.

We first attempted to categorize plan content for both the standardized test (with accompanying statistical model) criteria and the optional criteria. Each of us read all 29 plans in great detail and first attempted to use a five category breakdown to describe the statistical models used by the districts. It was

finally decided that these five categories were not useful, as each of the 29 districts employs a different statistical model. With the optional criteria, we more successfully grouped district plans into four categories, entitled competitive, fixed by district, variable by school (minimal), and variable by school (more substantial). Analysis of both the statistical models and the optional criteria is reported in the next section of this report (pages 11-27).

The second major set of records reviewed were the year end fiscal reports. These were obtained for all four years of the program, and furnished useful descriptive data, including the number and percentage of schools identified as meritorious, and the categories (and percentages of dollars) that identified how each district spent its merit school dollars. Analysis can be found in pp. 28-34, tables 5-8.

In preparation for phase two, and in consultation with DOE, a letter bearing Commissioner Castor's signature was sent to all participating districts on September 20, 1989, requesting that a list of merit schools for the past four years of the program be sent to us. This information was needed so that we could plan to interview school personnel from schools that had achieved merit school status as well as those that had not. By January, 1990, approximately half of the districts had responded. Reminder letters to the other districts were sent on January 8, 1990. By March, approximately 90% of the districts had responded.

In an attempt to elicit feedback from key administrators,

principals and union representatives, we decided to take advantage of the annual meeting of the Florida Education Research Association, held in Tallahassee on November 16-18, 1989. We requested and received approval to hold a seminar concerning the merit schools program. To help generate discussion, we coauthored a paper entitled "The Florida Merit Schools Program: an Initial Assessment". The following people participated in the seminar: Yvonne Burkholtz and Robert Sipes, Dade County School District; William Piotrowski, Leon County School District; Micheal O'Farrell, Senate Education Committee; Richard Layer, FEA; and Molly Read, FTP-NEA.

Phase Two: School Interviews --September to December, 1989

The primary focus of phase two was the in person interviewing of selected personnel from a sample of school districts. The purpose of the interviews was to elicit additional insights to more fully prepare for the mail questionnaire that constitutes phase three. Using the categories reflected in Table 8, p. 33, we selected five districts in which to perform interviews. These are: Dade, Brevard, Seminole, Marion, and Pinellas. Prior to our visits, we contacted the appropriate district program coordinator. In most cases, this person helped us schedule interviews in the schools. Interviews were held in the following districts on the following dates:

Dade	September 25-26
Seminole	November 16-17
Brevard	November 20-21
Marion	November 20-21
Pinellas	December 11-12

A set of open ended questions was developed (see appendix A). The questions were chosen as a result of the initial discussions with the DOE personnel, Senator Gordon, and a review of related literature. Using these questions, we attempted to ascertain a range of attitudes toward the program as well as better understand the relevant activities and processes.

During this phase we also obtained from DOE data concerning the socio-economic status (percent free and reduced lunch) and ehtnic group memebership of students in each Florida public school. Analysis of this data, performed in Phase IV, helped us assess the extent to which the merit schools program was free of bias related to the socio-economic status and minority status of students.

Phase three: Mail Survey January--March, 1990

During January and February, 1990, we drafted, revised, and pretested four survey instruments. Two of these were sent to teachers, one to principals and other school administrators, and one to district administrators. To permit comparisons between respondent groups, a set of common items were included in the surveys. Copies of the instruments can be found in Appendix B .

Almost all of the items were close-ended. The survey asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements. A scale of 1 to 5 was used, with 5 strongly agree, 1 strongly disagree, and 3 undecided. The survey sent to one group of teachers included statements concerning topics such as 1) overall impressions of the merit school program; 2) impact of the program on student learning; and 3) impact of the program on school based management practices. A supplemental set of statements concerning the effect of competition fostered by the Merit Schools Program was also sent to this first group of teachers (see appendix B). A second group of teachers were surveyed in terms of overall impressions plus their feelings regarding the standardized testing aspect of the program. A survey sent to principals and school administrators included the same set of statements found in the survey sent to the first group of teachers. Finally, district administrators were asked to respond to a smaller number of separately composed statements.

Surveys were mailed on February 16, 1990. Teachers and school administrators were sampled according to a sampling plan that is described on pages 37-40 of this report. Of the 3067 teachers surveyed, returns numbered 1138 or 37%. For principals and school administrators, 387 were surveyed, resulting in 210 returns, a rate of 54%. Tenty nine district administrators whose district participated in the program were surveyed, with 26 (90%) returning the surveys.

Given the reasonably high rate of return, it was decided that

no follow up telephone calls nor additional mailed surveys were necessary. Data was entered into the computer from returned surveys until April 6, 1990. This date was chosen to allow sufficient time to prepare analysis for those who agreed to participate in the Stakeholders conference held at the University of Central Florida on May 10-11, 1990.

Phase Four: Stakeholders conference, Preliminary final report, Final report--March, 1990 to June 30, 1990

The purpose of the conference was to review the survey results, discuss reasons for success or failure, and to identify possible recommendations for future improvements in the program. A list of issues and questions were distributed to each participant ahead of time (see Appendix C), along with summaries of initial data analysis. Twenty four people attended the conference, most of whom were school administrators. A list of attendees is found in Appendix D.

As a result of the conference, and at the request of Department of Education officials, a preliminary final report was drafted and distributed to key education officials and legislators. This report, mailed on May 18, 1990, commented on proposed legislation and provided some initial data analysis. The proposed optional Phase Five, in which we would work with legislators to write recommended changes in the Merit Schools program, did not occur as originally proposed. However, at the request of DOE officials, we provided our analysis of the recommendations found in

the report entitled "Florida's Quality Instruction Incentives Program: Allocation Patterns of Merit Schools - 1984-89" . This analysis, submitted on April 12, 1990, can be found in Appendix E.

The remaining time for the grant period has been spent performing further data analysis and preparing the final report.

THE FLORIDA MERIT SCHOOLS PROGRAM: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The Florida Quality Instruction Incentives Program, commonly known as the Merit Schools Program, has been funded for five years and currently distributes ten million dollars annually among participating school districts. In the 1988-89 academic year, 29 of the 67 county districts participated in the program. During its five year history, there has been no review or assessment of how the program is working or how the funds are spent by individual districts.

Data for this descriptive analysis was gleaned from interviews with selected district administrators and teachers, plus several sets of documents furnished by the Florida Department of Education. These documents include, first, all approved plans for the 1987-88 academic year. Second, end of the year financial reports (see figure one) for the first four years of the program furnished data concerning school participation and fund distribution. Third, the memorandum to all school districts that marks the beginning of the annual merit school program furnished useful data.

The following descriptive analysis reviews the following issues. First, demographic data concerning district participation is briefly reviewed. Next, in direct response to the RFP questions concerning the ways in which districts plans are similar and are different, the two major categories of merit school criteria that

all schools must address are discussed. Using a content analysis of 1987-88 plans, comments concerning these criteria are provided. Third, patterns in the percentages of schools designated as merit schools within each district are identified for the first four years of the program. Then the distributions of merit school funds are examined over time, with particular analysis made of how these distributions are linked to merit school percentages for each district.

DEMOGRAPHIC REVIEW OF PARTICIPATION IN THE MERIT SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Tables 1 through 3 provide an overall demographic view of district participation in the Florida Merit School program as of 1987-88. As indicated in Table 1, participation in terms of region is approximately the same (33-43%) statewide with the exception of the east central region (80%). Throughout the state, total student enrollment in districts that participate is approximately the same as in those that do not.

When the factor of size is considered, Table 2 provides a grouping of districts by the categories of very small, small, moderately small, moderate and large. Size is measured here by thousands of student enrollment in the district. Table 3 combines all the factors considered, indicating participation by size and region. Because the numbers in each category are relatively small, no real pattern emerges from this data.

Table 1: Listing of School Districts, Enrollment and Partaicipation in the 1987-88 Florida Merit Schools Program by Region (8/89)

Region	Participating				Not Participating		
	Dist code number		dollars (in thousands)	enroll.	Dist. code number		enroll. (in thousands)
1 northwest panhandle	3	Bay	$252	22	17	Escambia	42
	7	Calhoun	23	2	19	Franklin	2
	23	Gulf	25	2	20	Gadsden	8
	37	Leon	306	25	30	Holmes	3
	40	Madison	36	3	32	Jackson	8
	67	Washington	35	3	33	Jefferson	2
					39	Liberty	1
					46	Okaloosa	25
6 of 18 or 33% participation					57	Santa Rosa	13
					62	Taylor	3
					65	Wakulla	3
					66	Walton	4
2 northeast shoulder	2	Baker	$47	4	1	Alachua	24
	4	Bradford	49	4	9	Citrus	10
	18	Flagler	39	3	10	Clay	20
	45	Nassau	94	8	12	Columbia	8
	54	Putnam	130	11	15	Dixie	2
	61	Suwannee	58	5	16	Duval	105
	63	Union	20	2	21	Gilchrist	2
	42	Marion	316	26	24	Hamilton	2
					38	Levy	4
8 of 19 or 42% participation					34	Lafayette	1
					55	St. Johns	10
3 eastcentral	5	Brevard	$589	50	47	Okeechobee	5
	31	Indian R.	124	10	49	Osceola	14
	35	Lake	229	19			
	48	Orange	1030	89			
	56	St. Lucy	212	18			
	59	Seminole	508	44			
	60	Sumter	57	5			
	64	Volusia	504	42			
8 of 10 or 80% participation							
4 westcentral	25	Hardee	$47	4	8	Charlotte	10
	51	Pasco	360	30	14	Desoto	4
	52	Pinellas	1120	89	22	Glades	1
	58	Sarasota	326	26	27	Hernando	11
					28	Highlands	8
4 of 13 or 31 % participation					29	Hillsborough	118
					36	Lee	38
					41	Manatee	24
					53	Polk	61
5 south	13	Dade	$3243	254	6	Broward	137
	43	Martin	123	11	11	Collier	18
	44	Monroe	94	8	26	Hendry	5
					50	Palm Beach	90
3 of 7 or 43% participation							
Total student enrollment of participating dists. in thousands				815 (49%)	Total student enrollment of nonparticipating dists. in thousands		846 (51%)

Table 2: School District Size Categories and Number of Florida School Districts by Size Category (8/89)

Dist.size in thousands of students	number of dists.	size category	number of Florida dists. in size category
1	3		
2	8	Very small	26
3	6	(5 thousand or less)	
4	5		
5	4		
8	7		
10	4		
11	3	small	16
13	1	(6 to 14 thousand)	
14	1		
18	2		
19	1		
20	1		
22	1	Mod. small	11
24	2	(15 to 29 thousand)	
25	2		
26	2		
30	1		
38	1		
42	2	Moderate	7
44	1	(30 to 69 thousand)	
50	1		
61	1		
89	2		
90	1		
105	1	Large	7
118	1	(over 70 thousand)	
137	1		
254	1		

Table 3: Number of Participating (P) and NonParticipating (NP) Districts by Region and Size Category

Region	v. small		small		mod. small		moderate		large		total	
	P	NP	P	NP	P	NP	P	NP	P	NP	P	NP
1	4	7	0	3	2	1	0	1	0	0	6	12
2	5	4	2	4	1	2	0	0	0	1	8	11
3	1	1	1	1	2	0	3	0	1	0	8	2
4	1	2	0	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	4	9
5	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	3	4
	11	15	5	11	6	5	4	3	3	4	29	38

RECEIVED

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DISTRICT QUALITY INSTRUCTION INCENTIVE PROGRAM REPORT

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

A. 1986 - 1987
C. District Name: DADE
E. Administrative Cost $ 41,632

B. District Number: 13
D. District Funds $ 5,440
F. Student Recognition Awards $ 91,000

G. Meritorious Schools, s.231.532(3)(f), F.S.

1. Type School	2. # of Schools in District	3. # of Schools Participating in Meritorious Program	4. # of Meritorious Schools (State Fund)	5. # of Employees Receiving Awards (State Fund) (a) Instructional	5. # of Employees Receiving Awards (State Fund) (b) Noninstructional	6. Total Dollars Expended for Employees Awards (State Fund) *	7. Total Dollars Expended for Awards Other Than Employees (State Fund)
(a) Elementary	178	136	42	1,966	689	1,673,738	
(b) Junior or Middle	47	29	14	841	401	734,103	
(c) High School	24	16	7	949	333	829,342	
(d) Exceptional **	27	15	3	57	13	30,765	
(e) Vocational	27	9	3	245	89	163,359	
(f) Alternative							
(g) Other (Specify)							
1. Itinerant	N/A	N/A	N/A	253	9	75,459	
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
Total			69	4,311	1,534	$ 3,506,766	$
						Encumbered Funds Included	914000

H. Individual Performance Awards s.231.532(3)(a)-(e) and (g)-(h), F.S. ☐ None

1. Type Award s.231.532(3), F.S.	2. # Employees Receiving Awards	3. Total Dollar Amount Expended for Awards (State Funds)
(a) Outstanding Attendance		
(b) Critical Teacher Shortage Subject Area		
(c) Critical Teacher Shortage Area School Site		
(d) Infield Credit		
(e) Superior Evaluation by Principal		
(f) Extended Day Year		
(g) Other (Specify)		
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
Total		

I. Unexpended State Funds $ -0-

J. Superintendent's Signature (or designee) A. A. Fernandez

Date 12/14/87

* Includes fringe benefits

** Includes alternative [illegible]

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES AMONG DISTRICT PLANS: THE MAJOR CRITERIA USED TO DETERMINE MERIT SCHOOL STATUS

There are two major categories of criteria used to determine the merit school status of an individual school. First,

> Such a school shall be selected by at least exceeding its statistically verifiable expectancy level on an approved standardized test as measured by tests of verbal and quantifiable achievement. (CH 231.42, 3(f))

Although Department of Education guidelines propose a variety of possible statistical models, the school district does not have to follow any of these suggestions, and may create its own model or statistical process to meet this criterion.

Second, a standard or set of standards must be selected from at least one of the following types:

1) standardized tests;
2) participation standards;
3) achievement standards;
4) discipline standards (CH 231.42, 3(f))

There are no additional specific guidelines that schools must meet to achieve any or all of these standards. A statistical model does not have to be applied in the case of the non reading/math standardized tests. The legislation provides examples of the national physical fitness test or the state student achievement test (SSAT). The only restraining guideline is that schools must provide processes for recognizing student progress. Thus there must be a baseline percentage or figure for each standard identified in each district plan, plus there must be at least a minimal improvement over previous year's performance indicated as

part of the plan as well.

In the review of the school district plans that encompass these two major categories of merit school criteria, for the optional criteria, four nominal groupings were chosen. These are:

1) competitive--among schools;
2) fixed by district--all schools must adhere to these;
3) variable by school--minimal;
4) variable by school--more substantial.

A more in depth discussion of each of these two major categories of criteria follows. Analysis of how district plans are similar and how they differ is provided.

The Statistically Verifiable Standardized Test Criteria

The July 29, 1988 memorandum to district school superintendents on the subject of District Quality Instructional Incentives Program provided several examples of statistical models for use in selecting meritorious schools (see appendix F). It is not appropriate to discuss the wisdom or appropriateness of the methods illustrated in that memorandum. However, the examples do stimulate a number of interesting questions that need serious review. For example, what is really intended by Method III: Student improvement by within-school percentile distribution? Why have school districts avoided the use of a Standard Error of Estimate as recommended in Method I? Is the use of a Standard Error of Estimate really inappropriate or unrealistic?

Some of the methods were discussed in a set of papers authored for the Florida Assessment, Testing and Evaluation Sections of the

Division of Public Schools. The undated collection of papers entitled Methods For Determining Merit Schools contains chapters authored by Rick Nations, R. Clifford Blair, WIlliam Meredith and Linda Murray, Ray Turner and Robert Stephenson, and Richard Tate. In the papers, serious questions about the mathematical and statistical adequacy of some of the models have been raised. There is some awareness that, with respect to the models proposed by school districts, the task is not so much for school districts to defend the appropriateness of their model but for the state to either accept the model or prove that it is inappropriate. Because the program provided no additional resources for state supervision, it would be nearly impossible for the state to reject most any proposed model because the state's burden of proof of inappropriateness would be too great.

The analysis of the 1987-88 district plans made as a part of this study indicates that a very wide array of strategies are used by school districts to satisfy the standardized achievement test criterion. The state and school districts have assumed the criterion to require the use of norm referenced scores in describing academic achievement. Perhaps standardized criterion referenced tests would be just as appropriate. The term standardized test is used in another way when discussing optional criteria.

Most districts have generated unique strategies or have designed unique modifications of a method illustrated in the state's memorandum. Few districts have attempted to directly

implement one of the illustrated models.

Some of the models may result in the identification of random error. It is too easy to assume that any deviation from a predicted level is due to effects of teachers or school characteristics not built into the model. The assumption may not be valid, especially when the predictor variables used to project expected scores are strongly correlated with both the characteristics of merit schools and the dependent variable.

The statistical models described in several school district plans only briefly outline a general strategy. The description contained in the plans does not always include a description of the mathematical model used. Based on phone and personal conversations with a small nonrandom sample of school district test and measurement staff, there is reason to be concerned about the extent to which these staff believe in the appropriateness of the models being used by their districts. In some cases the models presented in the plans may not be the models actually used when the plan is implemented.

The plans differ in at least the following ways:

-- Some districts use one model for all school levels (elementary, middle and high school) while other districts vary the model by school level.

-- Some districts base their calculations on all students for whom test data are available and others use selected grade levels.

-- Some districts calculate achievement scores on a

student by student basis and others calculate building level mean scores.

-- Some districts average scores across all students or grade levels while others identify the percent of students or number of grade levels within a building that demonstrate improvement in achievement.

-- Some school districts identify gain as any increase in percentile score from one year to the next while other districts modify the required percentile increase by the stanine level at which the student performed during the base year.

-- Some districts use the previous year as the base for comparison while others use a running mean based on the school's grade level mean for three or more years.

-- Some districts use a regression model while others do not.

It is not always clear whether building level percentile norms or student level percentile norm serve as the reference point. Failure to attend to the difference is similar to failing to distinguish between a distribution of raw scores and a sampling distribution of means.

Another major distinction within the plans can be called a normative vs. ipsative distinction. In the normative based plans, the measured amount of academic gain in standardized test scores for each school is used to rank the schools. Merit schools are

either identified solely on the basis of this ranking (provided the school has made at least some effort in the optional category) or schools are assigned points based on their relative ranking in the district. The achievement test points are added to points earned in the optional category and merit school status is assigned to a fixed percent of schools with the highest number of total points.

In the ipsative based plans, each student's or each school's yearly achievement score is compared to the score form the previous year. Students or schools are required to compete with themselves. The required gain is often a single percentile point. In some districts the number of percentile points required to demonstrate gain varies by the level of the students' pervious achievement (stanine) score. Only a few of these plans consider error of measurement.

Because the plans vary on so many characteristics, it is difficult to accurately classify the plans by a simple scheme. Almost every school district has a unique set of strategies for identifying merit schools.

As mentioned previously, the extent to which test scores impact the selection of merit schools varies widely. In some districts, test scores are the primary, if not the only, criterion provided the school makes at least some effort on one or more of a set of optional criteria. In other districts, test scores count only as a small part of the number of points required to earn merit school status. The optional criteria account for the major number of point required to earn merit school status.

During a few of our interviews, some principals reported that they had to demonstrate to their teachers that no added work would be required in order to satisfy the test criterion. The school would have easily satisfied the requirement for every year during the past several years. They convinced the teachers to vote for participation in the merit school program because it would be a good motivator to help improve the school in other areas that everyone knew needed improvement. The money given to the school would help get the materials needed to make the school even better.

Appropriateness of Standardized Tests

Another set of issues has emerged from the current national and local discussions of the appropriateness of standardized test scores for differentiating between more and less effective teachers and schools. Based on a small set of interviews of administrators and teachers, articles and papers written by Florida Teachers, and interview data gathered for other studies in progress, it is clear that many of Florida's school administrators and classroom teachers do not distinguish between criterion referenced or minimum competency tests and standardized norm referenced test.

Because of local and state mandates to ensure that minimum competency and criterion referenced tests have what James Popham called instructional validity, school districts and schools take elaborate steps to ensure that the content of the such tests has

been taught. Local and state objectives strongly guide teaching to ensure that specific skills are mastered by students. Teachers are required to make sure that students study and master the specific objectives on which the tests are based.

Some administrators and teachers view standardized norm referenced tests from the same point of view. They want to make sure that the tests have instructional validity and they do what must be done to ensure, to the best of their ability, that students are provided instruction on what they have learned over time to be the content of the test. The content of standardized tests does not change frequently. Some teachers remember vocabulary and items from the test. In an effort to do what they think is proper and fair to students, some administrators and teachers invaliditate the test by building vocabulary lists derived form what they have seen on the tests, and create lessons to ensure that students have been taught the material included on the test. In addition, some teachers and administrators are very much aware of student testwiseness skills. They use a variety of materials such as "scoring high" and locally created materials to make sure that students are familiar with test item formats used on standardized norm referenced tests. In some cases teachers create test items identical to those on standardized tests but change a word or two in order to avoid what they think would be teaching the test or cheating.

One of several problems with using test scores to identify relative effectiveness of teachers and schools is that the use of

the practices listed above is uneven among teachers in a building and between schools. Some schools and teachers spend a great deal of time on standardized test preparation, while others send very little or no time on such practices. The impact of such practices and the use of standardized tests to identify more effective schools have recently been widely discussed under the topic of high-stakes testing.

During interviews, some teachers and administrators reported that they were totally unaware of the fact that test scores were used as a major factor in identifying merit schools and reported doing little or nothing to prepare students for the norm referenced standardized test. Other teachers and other schools had elaborate plans for teaching testwiseness skills with purchased and locally created material. Some teachers reported being in a dilemma. They did not like taking large amounts of time away from the regular curriculum to teach testwiseness and special content known to be on the test, a practice they believed to be unprofessional and more like cheating. Yet, they knew that their school needed to be identified as a merit school in order to boost pride, earn the respect of parents, or to have the money to purchase needed science materials, manipulatives and other items not provided by regular sources. They didn't like to have to "cheat or misuse instructional time" in order to help the school in other ways.

Administrators, and teachers reported that a concern about the pressure to score high on norm referenced and mastery or criterion referenced tests had gradually caused them to shift their

curriculum to match the content of the test. They believed the shifting of curriculum was partly responsible for the "test score creep" often visible in gradual increases in standardized test scores reported by local districts. Over time, the inflated scores make it nearly impossible for a school to score below their predicted achievement level when a simple expected level is based on old norms.

Some teachers and administrators indicated that school districts and test companies contributed to test score creep by providing schools with detailed item by item printouts of error reports called diagnostic reports. Such information seems to encourage them to modify their curriculum to fit the content of the test. They may refer to part of the test analysis as objective matching and criterion referenced analysis. Teachers indicated that they felt forced to modify their curriculum to fit the content of the test. It is another indicator of the failure to distinguish between norm referenced and criterion referenced tests.

Some teachers and administrators are concerned about the requirements for ever increasing test score that seem to be built into some models for identifying merit schools. If a total school can have an impact on student scores, it is unlikely that such an impact can be created in a short time. In schools that are truly producing students that achieve above their expected level, the expected level needs to be based on indicators other than last year's achievement. If last year's achievement is used, students who continue to demonstrate the same level of achievement above

what would be otherwise expected will have scores that indicate no gain and will be ignored. Some plans based on an ipsative strategy failed to consider that issue. It also is a problem in some regression models.

It would seem that there is much work to be done before the long list of statistical and measurement issues can be resolved. The issues need closer examination in order to assure teachers, administrators, parents, students, and other interested persons that the strategies being used to identify merit schools are appropriate.

Perhaps Albert Shanker was correct when he indicated in July, 1989, that we need to continue to identify and support the development of strategies for promoting programs such as Florida's merit schools program. He stressed the need to identify alternative assessment techniques. Shanker focused national attention on Florida's merit school program and its ability to promote school improvement through school based management and better teacher-administrator cooperation. But he seemed to be unaware of the extent to which we rely on standardized test scores when he said "Schools work hard to get their students to do well on tests when they know students' scores will be compared with the scores of their peers in other schools-- look at the way schools struggle to raise student grades on those idiotic standardized tests that are out there now."

The Optional Criteria

Given that the law provides an extreme amount of flexibility in terms of the Optional criteria, it is not surprising that there is a great variety in what criteria are found in the district plans throughout the state. The four groupings chosen for analysis, however, attempt to cluster the district plans according to 1) whether schools compete with each other or must only meet some standard(s); 2) the degree of discretion held by an individual school to choose what Optional standards it must meet; and 3) the degree of difficulty a school has in meeting these standards.

Grouping 1, labeled competitive, contains districts whose plans require competition among schools and a subsequent ranking according to the Optional Criteria standards chosen and met. It is the only one of the four groupings that reflects such competition, as the other three groupings require schools only to meet a predetermined standard.

In the second grouping, labeled fixed by district, the Optional Criteria standards are determined at the district level, with no variation from school to school (within the elementary, middle or junior high school and high school classifications). If a district's plan is placed in this category, all middle schools in that district, for example, must meet the proscribed standards.

Groupings three and four actually represent different degrees of the same aspect of Optional Criteria standards, i.e., the degree to which a school is given discretion over which standards are to

be chosen. For grouping three, choice is minimal, while for grouping four a much greater degree of discretion is available.

For all district plans, an initial determination of projected difficulty in meeting these Optional Criteria standards is made. The criteria used to determine degrees of difficulty are several. First, since there are 4 types of Optional Criteria standards identified in the legislation, and a potentially unlimited number of standards that could be chosen within each type, the total number of standards chosen must be considered. Although there may be exceptions, the fewer the standards that must be met, the easier it will be for schools to meet them.

Second, the weight given to each standard varies from plan to plan. In some district plans, for example, each standard is weighed equally, as all standards must be met and there is no point scheme. In other plans, there is a point rating scheme as, with a specified minimum number of points allocated to the meeting of each standard, and an overall minimum number of points needed for merit school status.

A weighing scheme may not necessary help to decide if one set of Optional Criteria standards are easier than another unless the specific standards chosen are assessed according to how much effort beyond normal activities must be made by a school to meet them. It would seem likely that a standard that read " a 1% increase in the number of students competing in the district science fair" would be much easier to achieve than, for example, a standard that wished to achieve "a 5% decrease in the school dropout rate". In the former

case, more teachers could simply make district science fair participation a course requirement. In the latter case, a specialized counseling program, among other activities, may have to be developed.

In many cases, it seems as though districts have chosen Optional Criteria standards that only minimally meet the requirements of the legislation. In those districts, it seems likely that very few schools who meet the statistically verifiable standardized test criteria are not given merit school status because they have failed or do not meet the Optional Criteria standards.

An Initial Description of Optional Criteria Patterns, 1987-88

Even though four categories were devised to describe the Optional Criteria,it is still very difficult to generalize across all district plans. It is additionally difficult to validly explain why such patterns exist without discussing the merit school program with district officials. Nevertheless, as indicated in Table 4, some initial description and analysis can be made.

Only one district was found to have plans whose optional criteria clearly fell into category one (competitive). In Dade, each school must create a school wide program based upon an identified theme. Each optional plan must contain elements such as a strategy for implementing the school wide plan and identification of how the results will be documented.

TABLE 4

County	Optional Criteria Rating (1987-88)
Baker	2
Bay	2
Bradford	2
Brevard	3
Calhoun	2
Dade	1
Gulf	2
Flagler	2
Hardee	2
Indian River	2
Lake	2
Leon	4
Madison	4
Martin	3/4
Monroe	3
Nassau	2
Orange	2
Pasco	2
Pinellas	4
Putnam	2/1
St. Lucie	4
Sarasota	2
Seminole	3
Sumter	2
Suwannee	2
Union	2
Volusia	3
Washington	2

CODES 1 = competitive 2 = fixed by district
3 = variable by school (minimal)
4 = variable by school (more substantial)

Over half (16 of 29) of the district plans identified optional criteria that were fixed at the district level without allowing for school discretion (category 2). In many cases, the criteria seemed easy to meet, requiring little additional effort by school teachers and administrators. Many of these plans identified only one to three criteria. One district, for example, requires only that school increase the number of students participating in the annual district art festival. Another district had only one requirement: increase student attendance. In a third district, schools must 1) increase the number of student entries in a school anthology and 2) increase enrollment in advanced classes. In a fourth district, three separate criteria are identified, one each for elementary schools, middle schools and high schools.

Of the final two categories, which classify the degree of discretion given to individual schools, six districts received a rating of three (minimal discretion), while four received a four rating (more than minimal discretion). For both categories, schools were not competing with each other, but were attempting to achieve identified standards. Examples of district plans that are placed in these two categories include the following. One district directs schools to choose two standards from among a series of achievement and participation options offered. There are 11 achievement standards, including "exceed by 2% the baseline percentage of students tested who perform above the 50th percentile". For participation standards, the school is directed to develop its own standards "with measurable criteria for

improvement" and an implementation plan. Suggested topics include: original writing from students, improving student attendance, increased parent participation, etc. Another district plan indicates that there must be at least a 1% gain in the number of students participating in approved competitive activities. There are over 200 activities listed from which a school can choose.

In category 4, there is a greater increase in the school choice of optional criteria. For example, in one district's plan, each school has complete discretion over what will be chosen. Apparently the merit school committee in each school chooses a theme such as participation in a social science fair, a science fair, and a drop out prevention program. In this case, the choice of optimal criteria is decentralized to the school level.

Whether or not a district's plan contains optional criteria that are judged to be easy or not, the plan can not identify the extent to which those criteria were met. Furthermore, there can be no analysis of the effects of attempting to meet these standards on the overall goals of the merit school program. It may be, for example, that a school must only increase participation in the school writing anthology by one percent to meet the plan's requirements, but finds that it achieves a 20 or 30 percent increase. In doing so, it may also create a new sense of school pride and spirit that would not have otherwise existed. Additional school and district data must be examined to more fully ascertain the effect of this aspect of the merit schools program.

PATTERNS OF PARTICIPATION AND PERCENTAGES OF SCHOOLS IDENTIFIED AS MERIT SCHOOLS, 1984-1988

As indicated in Table 5, several patterns of participation and designation of merit school status are observed when examining school districts data. Some districts designate a consistently low percentage of merit schools, while the percentage for other districts is consistently high. The percentage of merit schools has decreased for some districts, while it has increased for others. Possible reasons for these patterns are discussed.

Dade, Brevard and Putnam are three districts that have participated in all four years of the program, and consistently designate a 25-35% of schools as merit schools. These results are likely to indicate a program established to discriminate among different levels of achievement. The program is designed to choose only the schools that score the highest on the designated criteria to be merit schools. After the first year of the program, in Dade county, for example, about two-thirds of all schools had participated in the program, with 25-35% of these achieving a merit school status. Dade created a two tiered system, with schools designated merit schools if they ranked in the top 25-35% on the standardized test criteria. To achieve a school of excellence designation, a school must create and implement a school wide program that is judged in competition with other schools. In Brevard, about 100% of schools have participated in the program each year, with 28-34% of the schools given a merit school

TABLE 5: Number and Percent of Schools That Participated and were Identified as Meritorious (9/89)

COUNTY	1984-1985					1985-1986					1986-1987					1987-1988				
	# S	# SUP	# MS	% SID	%SUP	# S	# SUP	# MS	% SID	% SUP	# S	# SUP	# MS	% SID	% SUP	# S	# SUP	# MS	% SID	% SUP
Baker	5	5	4	80	80	5	5	5	100	100	5	5	2	40	40	5	5	3	60	60
Broward	168	165	43	26	26	154	150	42	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Bay	---	---	---	---	---	30	24	6	20	25	30	28	7	23.3	25	31	27	24	77.4	88.8
Bradford	---	---	---	---	---	8	8	1	12.5	12.5	8	8	5	62.5	62.5	---	---	---	0	0
Brevard	66	64	19	28.8	29.7	69	69	20	28.9	28.9	69	67	23	33.3	34.3	69	66	21	30.4	31.8
Calhoun	5	5	0	returned $		5	5	4	80	80	5	1	1	20	20	5	2	2	40	40
Columbia	9	9	4	44.4	44.4	9	9	2	22.2	22.2	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Dade	243	232	58	23.9	25	306	200	51	16.7	25.5	303	205	69	22.7	33.7	297	199	69	23.2	34.7
DeSoto	5	5	5	100	100	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Dixie	3	3	3	100	100	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Gulf	5	5	4	80	80	5	5	4	80	80	5	5	0	0	0	5	5	4	80	80
Flagler	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	3	2	66.7	66.7	4	4	2	50	50
Hamilton	6	6	3	50	50	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Hardee	6	6	1	16.6	16.6	6	6	2	33.3	33.3	---	---	---	---	---	6	6	2	33.3	33.3
Highlands	11	11	5	45.4	45.4	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Indian River	15	15	5	33.3	33.3	16	16	6	37.5	37.5	16	16	7	43.8	43.8	18	18	---	38.8	38.8
Jackson	17	14	14	82.3	82.3	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Lafayette	2	2	1	50	50	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Lake	36	32	7	19.4	21.8	36	26	8	22.2	30.8	---	---	---	---	---	38	27	4	10.5	14.8
Leon	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	33	30	23	69.6	76.7	35	35	32	91.4	91.4
Levy	9	9	3	33.3	33.3	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Madison	7	7	7	100	100	7	7	7	100	100	7	7	6	85.7	85.7	7	7	6	85.7	85.7
Manatee	32	27	8	25	29.6	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Marion	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	33	30	21	63.6	70
Martin	12	7	7	58.3	100	12	6	3	25	50	12	12	5	41.6	41.6	15	15	15	100	100
Monroe	13	9	3	23.1	33.3	13	13	3	23.1	23.1	13	12	6	46.2	46.2	13	12	6	46.2	50
Nassau	13	13	9	69.2	69.2	13	13	5	38.5	38.5	14	14	6	42.9	42.9	14	14	8	57.1	57.1
Orange	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	108	105	102	94.4	94.4	109	109	?	81.6	81.6
Pasco	35	35	16	45.7	45.7	36	36	21	58.3	58.3	36	36	11	30.6	30.6	35	35	9	25.7	25.7
Pinellas	123	120	110	89.4	91.7	123	122	74	60.2	60.6	124	119	100	80.6	80.6	127	121	103	81.1	85.1
Putnam	17	16	5	29.4	31.2	17	16	5	29.4	31.2	16	16	5	31.2	31.2	16	16	4	25	25
St. Lucie	19	7	7	36.8	100	20	12	7	35	58.3	---	---	---	---	---	23	22	6	26.1	27.2
Sarasota	33	27	14	42.4	51.8	33	33	17	51.8	51.8	33	31	20	60.6	60.6	35	33	17	47.1	51.5
Seminole	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	43	20	15	34.9	75
Sumter	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	8	7	2	28.6	28.6	8	8	1	12.5	12.5
Suwannee	6	6	2	33.3	33.5	6	6	1	16.6	16.6	6	6	4	66.7	66.7	5	5	3	60	60
Union	3	3	1	33	33	3	2	2	67	67	---	---	---	---	---	3	3	1	33	33
Volusia	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	53	52	29	54.7	54.7	52	52	28	53.8	53.8
Wakulla	5	5	5	100	100	5	5	5	100	100	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Washington	6	6	2	33	33	7	6	6	85.7	85.7	---	---	---	---	---	7	7	7	100	100

S - # of schools in the district
SUP - # of schools in the district which participated
MS - # of meritolous schools in the district
% SID - meritorious schools as a percent of schools in the district
% SUP - meritorious schools as a percent of schools which participated

designation.

Part of the explanation must lie in the fact that all three districts provide salary supplements (Dade and Brevard) and fund teacher awards (Putnam) (see table 6) as the means by which merit school funds are distributed. If the contract between teachers and the district designates a minimum amount for a salary supplement, e.g. $500 for a full time teacher, then this minimum may be the determining factor leading to a low percentage of merit schools in the district.

Other districts have designated a much higher consistent percentage of schools as merit schools. Sarasota (4 years in the program, 51-60%), Volusia (2 years, approx. 54%), Pinellas (4 years, 60-91%) and Orange (2 years, 81-94%) are examples of districts that fall into this category. In all four districts, almost 100% of schools participate in the program. There is no suggestion here that schools in these districts are somehow more meritorious than most of those in the three previously mentioned districts. It is much more likely that the standards chosen by these districts deliberately allow for a much higher percentage of merit schools.

Patterns for other districts, though, are not consistent over time. In the first two years of the program, St. Lucie schools participated only at a rate of 35-37%, with 100% (n=7) winning merit school status in the first year, and 58% (7 of 12) designated merit schools in the second year. In the third year, no school participated in the program. In 1987-88, 22 of 23 schools

participated, but only 6 (27.2%) became merit schools. A similar pattern has been evident in Lake, which did not participate in the third year as well. Even though participation of schools in the program has remained high (72-88%), the percentage of schools designated as meritorious dropped from a high of 31% in 1985-86 to a low of 15% in 1987-88.

Three districts have raised the percentage of merit schools quite drastically. Bay, after not participating in the program in the first year, reported that 90% of schools who entered the program received merit school status, a substantial increase over the 25% from the previous two years. All 15 of Martin's schools were merit schools in 1987-88, a percentage up from the 41-50% of the previous two years. The percentage of merit schools in Leon also increased from 77 in 1986-87 to 91 in 1987-88.

A complete explanation for the inconsistent patterns can not be obtained from only examining plans and data available on file at the Department of Education. In theory, at least, some possible explanations can be proposed. These range from positive to cynical.

If one purpose of the merit schools program is to raise the quality of instruction and increase learning in Florida's school districts, then is should not be surprising that percentages of merit schools would increase over time. Assuming that there are no logistical constraints that would prevent 100% of the schools from becoming merit schools in a given year, it would seem likely that within a very short time, teachers and administrators in a given

school would desire to achieve merit school status. This may be even more true if, for example, a rival school was designated meritorious. Desiring the improved reputation that accompanies the merit school designation, all would work more diligently to increase student scores on standardized tests and the other Optional Criteria standards.

A very sudden increase in the percentage of schools achieving merit school status, though, may mean district administrators have altered the choice of merit school standards to allow for a higher percentage of schools to win the merit school designation. It may be that both union officials and administrators have received many complaints from teachers who are in schools that have not been awarded merit school status.

From the analysis of the percentage of merit school winners over time, in most districts the criteria for determining merit school status have not changed. After the first year of the program, the change in the law allowing more than 25% of schools in a given district to become merit schools had some impact on the acceptance of the program by some districts. Those districts that have entered the program more recently have tended to choose criteria that lead to a high percentage of merit schools. As our content analysis of district plans indicated, in many cases districts used the same plan year after year, changing only the dates.

DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS RECEIVED BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Each district may choose to spend merit school funds in several different ways. There are three general categories: 1) salary requirements; 2) materials; and 3) individual awards. Within these three categories, variation can exist. Salary supplements may be a variety of amounts, and can be allotted to administrators, teachers, and other school personnel at the district's discretion. Materials can be purchased by each school's QUIIP committee, or an individual teacher may be allowed to decide what materials should be purchased to be used only for his/her classes. The legislation does identify individual award categories, including 1) outstanding (teacher) attendance; 2) employment in a critical teacher shortage subject area; 3) employment in a critical teacher shortage school site; 4) reimbursement for completion of in field credit; and 5) superior performance evaluation. Districts which choose the individual award category, however, are not limited to these legislative suggestions and may create their own programs. A district may choose one or more of these categories, with a variety of fund dollars allocated to one or more category. The only legislative stipulation is that at least 50% of the funds be allocated to the schools (or teachers and other personnel within the schools) that are designated merit schools.

Table 6 indicates the percentages of fund distribution for all participating districts during the first four years of the program. Very few districts that have participated throughout the program have changed the categories in which they allocate the funds. Some

TABLE 6: Distribution of Merit Funds (10/30/89)

County	1984 - 1985		1985 - 1986		1986 - 1987		1987 - 1988	
	Area	Amount	Area	Amount	Area	Amount	Area	Amount
Baker	6 + M	50%+50%	6 + M	50%+50%	6 + M	50%+50%	6 + M	50%+50%
Bay	---	---	6	96%	6 + 7	76%+19%	6 + 7	73%+19%
Bradford	---	---	6 + M	52%+48%	6 + M	44%+50%	M	100%
Brevard	6 + M	89%+11%	6 + M	69%+30%	6 + M	61%+38%	6 + M	55%+45%
Broward	6	99%	6	98%	---	---	---	---
Calhoun	---	---	6	100%	6	100%	6	100%
Columbia	6 + M	50%+50%	6 + M	50%+50%	---	---	---	---
Dade	6 + M	66%+32%	6	97%	6	96%	6	99%
DeSoto	6	99%	---	---	---	---	---	---
Dixie	6	99%	---	---	---	---	---	---
Gulf	7	99%	7	99%	---	---	7	98%
Flagler	---	---	---	---	7	100%	7	100%
Hamilton	6 + M	84%+15%	M	100%	---	---	---	---
Hardee	6	99%	6	98%	---	---	6 + M	52%+45%
Highlands	6	98%	---	---	---	---	---	---
Indian River	6 + M	50%+49%	6 + M	50%+50%	6 + M	50%+50%	6 + M	57%+43%
Jackson	6+7+M	24+24+47%	---	---	---	---	---	---
Lafayette	6 + M	50%+50%	---	---	---	---	---	---
Lake	6 + M	49%+50%	6+7+M	37+12+50%	---	---	6+7+M	38+12+50%
Leon	---	---	---	---	7	99%	7	100%
Levy	6 + M	64%+35%	---	---	---	---	---	---
Madison	6 + M	79%+20%	6 + M	65%+35%	6 + M	62%+37%	6 + M	59%+40%
Manatee	6 + M	50%+50%	---	---	---	---	---	---
Marion	---	---	---	---	---	---	7	99%
Martin	6 + M	88%+12%	6 + M	78%+22%	6 + M	49%+49%	6 + M	50%+50%
Monroe	6	93%	6	91%	6	92%	6	90%
Nassau	6 + 7	74%+20%	6 + 7	75%+20%	6	95%	6	94%
Orange	---	---	---	---	7	100%	7 + M	69%+26%
Pasco	6 + M	50%+49%	6 + M	51%+49%	6 + M	50%+50%	6 + M	49%+48%
Pinellas	7	100%	7	100%	7 + M	95%+5%	6 + M	95%+5%
Putnam	6	99%	6	99%	6	100%	6	99%
St. Lucie	6	100%	6	100%	---	---	6	100%
Sarasota	6 + M	70%+23%	6 + M	65%+22%	6 + M	73%+13%	6 + M	74%+7%
Seminole	---	---	---	---	---	---	7 + M	71%+20%
Sumter	---	---	---	---	6	100%	6	100%
Suwannee	6 + M	49%+48%	6 + M	50%+50%	6 + M	57%+40%	6 + M	54%+46%
Union	6	100%	6	100%	7 + M	66%+33%	6	100%
Volusia	---	---	---	---	---	---	7 + M	71%+28%
Wakulla	6	100%	7	100%	---	---	---	---
Washington	7	99%	7	100%	---	---	7	100%

CODES 6 = salary supplements 7 = materials M = individual awards

TABLE 7

FUNDING IMPLEMENTATION	NUMBER OF COUNTIES			
	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88
(6)	10	9	6	8
(6 + H)	15	10	9	10
(7)	3	4	3	5
(6 + 7)	1	1	1	1
(7 + H)	0	0	2	3
(H)	0	1	0	1
(6+7+H)	1	1	0	1
Total	30	26	21	29

exceptions are Bradford, which shifted from a combination of salary supplements and individual awards to 100% individual awards; and Hardee, which shifted from nearly all salary supplements to a combination of salary supplements and individual awards.

When the totals for each category are compared, however, one interesting pattern does appear. As shown in Table 7, in 1984-85, 25 or 30 (83%) of districts chose to distribute the funds directly to individual personnel (6 and 6+H), with only 17% of the districts providing any money for materials. By 1987-88, the former category had fallen to 62%, with an increasing number of districts (34%) providing some funds for materials. Those districts which have entered the merit schools program in the last few years have thus tended to emphasize the entire merit school receiving funds for materials rather than individuals receiving funds.

Comparison of Fund Distribution by Percentage of Merit Schools Within the District

For 1987-88, Table 8 provides additional descriptive analysis. When categories of fund distribution are also categorized by percentage of merit schools within a district, some additional patterns are evident. First, no district that provides only salary supplements (category 6) has designated more than 57% of its schools as merit schools. Although further examination is necessary to fully explain this result, it seems likely that a minimum dollar amount per merit school employee has been

TABLE 8

PERCENT OF SCHOOLS WHICH PARTICIPATED
AND WERE DESIGNATED AS MERIT SCHOOLS
(1987 - 1988)

FUNDING IMPLEMENTATION

	0% - 35%	36% - 70%	71% - 100%
salary supplements (6)	Dade Putnam St. Lucie Sumter Union	Monroe Nassau Calhoun	
salary supplements and individual awards (6+H)	Brevard Pasco Hardee	Indian River Sarasota Baker Suwannee	Martin Madison
materials (7)		Marion Flagler	Leon Gulf Washington Pinellas
materials & individual awards (7+H)		Volusia	Orange Seminole
salary supplements & materials (6+7)			Bay
all (6+7+H)	Lake		

* individual awards (H) + returned 50% of the funds - Bradford

established. Depending upon the total funds available to a district, this minimum amount would also limit the number of schools designated as meritorious.

Given the distribution process at the district level for funds to be spent on materials (category 7), it is not surprising that the percentage of merit schools for most of these districts is high. In these latter districts, a school based merit school committee is likely to decide what materials will be purchased with these funds. There is no concern that some minimum amount per teacher needs to be awarded, as there may be in those districts that distribute the funds through salary supplements.

THE MEASUREMENT AND DOCUMENTATION OF MERIT SCHOOL GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

In most districts, school buildings are required to keep on file documentation supporting the achievement of merit school goals. For the most part, this documentation refers to the attainment of the optional criteria, as standardized achievement test scores are collected at the district level. In many cases, buildings report to the district the relevant percentages and supply a narrative description of the activities that lead to the achievement of the optional criteria.

Interview data indicated, however, that little if any accountability is required. No one from the district level in many districts ever requests buildings to provide the supporting

documentation for the level of achievement claimed. In essence, the word of the principal or school administrator is accepted as the truth.

There was no indication, however, that schools cheated in their attempt to score well on the optional criteria. This behavior would not be occurring in those districts in which a high percentage of schools were awarded merit school status. In other words, cheating would not be necessary. In a high percentage of cases, schools did not achieve merit school status because their standardized achievement test scores were not high enough. For these schools, supporting documentation for the optional criteria would not be needed as well.

THE MERIT SCHOOLS PROGRAM: IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section of the final report deals with general or overall programmatic impacts and more specific impacts of the merit schools program, including : 1) socioeconomic level and minority patterns among students; 2) student learning; 3) instructional practices; 4) school based management; 5) economic incentives for teachers; 6) a sense of competition; and 7) personnel practices. There are two data sources. A survey instrument mailed to a sample of teachers, principals and school administrators, and district administrators comprises the primary data source. Second, to analyze the impact of the program in terms of the socio-economic composition of the students, free and reduced lunch data and ethnic group membership from 1986-89 was obtained.

Results of the survey contribute to the impact analysis in several respects. First, agreement with specific sets of statements were combined to form three indices. Using analysis of variance, results indicate that there were no significant differences among the responses from elementary schools, middle/junior high schools, and high schools. When districts are divided into categories according to how merit dollars are awarded, significant differences do occur. In other words, responses from districts which award merit school funds primarily in the form of instructional materials and equipment differ significantly from those districts which provide primarily salary

supplements. For reasons that will be discussed, responses from Dade County constituted a third category. Responses from teachers, principals and other school administrators are analyzed according to the three categories of districts. In this analysis, responses to specific statements are examined.

Using the above mentioned data, we first assess the overall impact of the merit schools program. After reviewing the impact of the program in terms of student socioeconomic level and minority patterns, we then discuss the more specific impacts on student learning and instructional practices. Within the discussion of student learning, a comment on the use of standardized tests and the statistical model requirement of the program is included. Another positive impact of the program, the encouragement of school based management practices, is then examined. Next, two more minor impacts, those dealing with a sense of competition and with teacher transfers, are discussed. We then analyze the program in terms of whether it provides adequate economic incentives for teachers before providing our concluding comments which include recommendations for future changes.

SAMPLING PLAN FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR AND TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRES

A two stage sampling strategy for school administrators and a three stage sampling strategy for teachers was used. The stages were:

1. Stratified random sample of participating districts (with two modifications)
2. Stratified random sample of schools within selected districts
3. Systematic random sample of teachers within selected schools

Stage 1: Stratified random sample of participating districts

To ensure representativeness, a decision was made to survey one third of the participating districts. Districts which participated in 1987-88 were classified into a 5 x 3 table. The five levels of the first variable were types of awards; salary supplements only, salary supplements and individual awards, materials only, materials and individual awards, other plans. The three levels of the second variable were percent ranges of participating schools classified as merit schools; 0% to 35%, 36% to 70%, 71% to 100%.

Modification: Because Dade county received approximately one third of the entire Merit Schools budget and included approximately one third of the participating schools within the state, Dade County was selected to participate and was removed from the matrix of remaining districts.

The three cells associated with "other plans" were

combined. There were only two districts, one in each of two of the three cells. One of the two was selected by use of a random number table.

Nine additional districts were selected in the following manner. Nine of the remaining twelve cells contained school districts, 2 cells with four districts, 4 cells with three districts, 2 cells with 2 districts, 1 cell with one district. With the exception of the 1 district cell, districts were randomly assigned a number from one to 25. A series of random numbers was generated and used to select one school district from each of the eight cells containing two or more districts. The district in the one district cell was also selected.

Modification: Because the Merit Schools program is a state-wide program and districts from every region of the state participate, the selected sample of districts was checked for regional representation. Two regions were under represented, the north west panhandle and the west central regions. One additional district was randomly selected from each of those regions. A total of thirteen districts were included in the sample.

Stage 2: Stratified random sample of schools within selected districts

The schools within each district which participated in the merit schools program for one or more year were stratified by level: elementary school, middle or junior high school, high school. Special schools and alternative schools were excluded. The Florida Education Directory, 1988-89, was used as the reference. For each selected school district, the schools within each stratum were numbered alphabetically. An independent set of random numbers was generated for each set of schools. A twenty five percent random sample was selected from each set. At least one school was selected from each stratum for each school district.

The resulting sample consisted of 180 schools; 118 elementary schools, 37 middle or junior high schools, and 25 high schools. Each school with less than 75 teachers was sent two school administrator questionnaires; one for the principal and one for any other administrator in the school. Each school with 75 or more teachers was sent three school administrator questionnaires, one for the principal and two to be distributed to any other appropriate administrators.

Stage 3: Systematic random sample of teachers within selected schools

The desired number of teacher returns was set at 1,000. Using an expected return rate of approximately one third, 3,000 teacher questionnaires would need to be distributed.

Approximately 9,000 teachers were employed in the 180 selected schools. A distribution of 3,000 questionnaires among 9,000 teachers, required that the one third of the teachers be given questionnaires.

The principal in each selected school was sent a packet of containing questionnaires for one third of the teachers assigned to the school. The principal was asked to consider the list of teachers to be numbered and to distribute the questionnaires to every third teacher beginning with teacher number three. Two forms of the teacher questionnaire were created. Copies of form A and form B were alternated. Every sixth teacher received form A and every sixth teacher received form B.

INDEX CREATION

To help assess the impact of the program, three indices were created. Each represents a general measure of the three major impacts of the program. ATTITUDE reflects the overall general feeling about the merit schools program. INSTRUCT measures the extent to which a major goal of the program has been achieved, the improvement of instructional practices. TEAMWRK represents the degree to which school based management activities and practices were increased because of the program.

Each index is an additive scale formed from responses to various statements. ATTITUDE reflects responses to ten statements, five of which are phrased in a format favorable to

TABLE 9

QUESTIONNAIRES MAILED

DISTRICTS AND NUMBER OF SCHOOL

1. District Coordinator's Questionnaire:
   Mailed: 1 to each of 29 participating school districts

2. Teacher and School Administrator Questionnaire
   Districts:

Dade:	6 of 25	High Schools
	12 of 49	Middle/Jr. High
	44 of 172	Elementary

Salary Supplement Districts:

Sumter:	1 of 2	High Schools
	1 of 2	Middle/Jr. High
	1 of 5	Elementary
Brevard:	3 of 10	High Schools
	4 of 12	Middle/Jr. High
	10 of 42	Elementary
Nassau	1 of 3	High Schools
	1 of 3	Middle/Jr. High
	2 of 8	Elementary
Suwannee	1 of 2	High Schools
	1 of 1	Middle/Jr. High
	1 of 2	Elementary
Madison	1 of 1	High Schools
	1 of 4	Middle/Jr. High
	1 of 2	Elementary
Bay	1 of 3	High Schools
	2 of 5	Middle/Jr. High
	4 of 17	Elementary

TABLE 10

Materials and Equipment Districts:

Marion:	2 of 5	High Schools
	2 of 6	Middle/Jr. High
	5 of 21	Elementary
Washington	1 of 2	High Schools
	1 of 2	Middle/Jr. High
	1 of 2	Elementary
Volusia	1 of 7	High Schools
	2 of 8	Middle/Jr. High
	9 of 35	Elementary
Orange	2 of 10	High Schools
	4 of 19	Middle/Jr. High
	18 of 73	Elementary
Leon	2 of 5	High Schools
	2 of 6	Middle/Jr. High
	4 of 20	Elementary
Pinellas	3 of 15	High Schools
	4 of 21	Middle/Jr. High
	18 of 74	Elementary

TABLE 11

QUESTIONNAIRE RETURN RATE

1. District Coordinators: 26 of 29
90 %

2. School Administrators:

	High School	Middle/ Jr.	Elementary
Dade	10 of 18 56%	16 of 27 59%	46 of 89 52%
Salary Supplement	14 of 21 67%	15 of 20 75%	21 of 38 55%
Materials and Equp	20 of 31 65%	13 of 32 41%	55 of 111 50%

3. Teachers:

	High School	Middle/ Jr. High	Elementary
Dade	76 of 275 28%	76 of 270 28%	249 of 667 37%
Salary Supplement	62 of 209 30%	41 of 129 32%	103 of 206 50%
Materials and Equp	126 of 387 33%	91 of 269 34%	287 of 655 44%

the merit schools program, and five of which are negative. Scaling of the negative statements was adjusted prior to addition. In the former group are statements suggesting that the program is fair to all schools, has a positive impact, rewards good work, results in a wise use of state funds, and helps school improvement. In the more negative group are found statements such as the merit schools program has pushed schools towards trivial learning, promotes practices that diminish learning, uses test scores that give false information, is influenced by politics, and results in a competition that is corrupting.

INSTRUCT is the compilation of reactions to four statements concerning instructional practices. These are that the program requires teachers to contribute more hours to school, results in more time spent on student learning, encourages teachers to use more effective instructional methods, and produces improved equipment and materials.

TEAMWRK measures the degree to which the program has improved practices that lead to a greater acceptance of school based management practices. Responses from seven statements are compiled, reflecting the degree to which the program has resulted in better teamwork among teachers, among teachers and administrators, and five statements concerning increased teacher input into decisions about the choice of instructional methods, the purchase of equipment and materials, school policy and procedures, school goals, and activities found in other grades.

In terms of the district categories, survey responses were

separated into three categories, based upon the method of awarding merit school funds. These categories are: a) responses from those districts that award salary supplements; b) from those districts that award dollars to be spent primarily on instructional materials; and c) from Dade County. Dade County was separated because: 1) it has the largest merit school program; and 2) although it distributes its award dollars in the form of salary supplements, responses from Dade educators indicate a much more positive view of the merit school program than is found in other districts that award salary supplements.

When examining the means for each district category by school level for each index, a clear pattern emerges (see tables in Appendix H). When means are reviewed and a two way analysis of variance performed, there are significant differences among district categories. In every case but two, however, there are no significant differences among school levels. In no case is there a significant interaction effect.

When examining the ATTITUDE index for the first teacher survey, by examining the means for districts, and comparing the difference among the means as a fraction of the pooled standard deviation, a practical difference in significance appears for district categories. The difference between the means for salary supplement districts and materials districts is 4.5, an amount almost equivalent to one half the pooled standard deviation. The summary means for school levels, though, are much closer, with the difference between the lowest and the highest only 1.7. As a

fraction of the pooled standard deviation, this figure is not high enough to be considered significant. For the second teachers survey, the results for the ATTITUDE index are very similar, with means for districts ranging from 30.6 to 34.0 (difference of 3.4--more than one third the pooled standard deviation of 9.08), and means for school level ranging from 32.7 to 33.2. For school administrators, the school level means difference of 3.1, and the district mean difference of 5.2 both indicate a practical significant difference given the pooled standard deviation of 9.26.

The INSTRUCT index reflects a similar pattern, with salary supplement district teachers providing a smaller overall mean of 12.3, much less than the high of 14.3 for materials only districts. The difference in means is 2.0, more than one half the pooled standard deviation of 3.6. As school level mean differences are only .9, one quarter of the pooled standard deviation, there is no practical significant difference. For school administrators, school level means are almost exactly the same (12.7), while the same pattern holds true for districts as did for teachers, with a mean difference of 2.8 compared to the pooled standard deviation value of 3.84.

Results for the TEAMWRK index reflect the same pattern. Difference in district means for teachers is 2.9, almost one half the pooled standard deviation value of 6.54. The school level difference of 1.7 is less than one third. For school administrators, the practical significant difference for

districts is even greater, with a mean difference of 4.9 compared to a pooled standard deviation value of 6.61. The school level mean difference of 1.2 reflects no practical significant difference.

With the indices providing guidance concerning how to present our analysis, the next section provides a more specific examination of the responses to various statements for each major impact area. Our analysis will refer to the responses found in Appendices X & Y, with page and statement noted. Responses indicating "strongly agree" and "agree" have been collapsed into an "agree" category; similarly, "strongly disagree" and "disagree" responses have become "disagree". Throughout, responses from teachers and administrators will be compared, as well as responses from the three district categories.

OVERALL IMPACT OF THE MERIT SCHOOLS PROGRAM

In general, the impact of the merit schools program is viewed as positive, with principals and school administrators having a more positive view than teachers. Responses from the materials only districts are much more positive than those from the salary supplement districts, with responses from Dade positive but less so than the materials only group. In fact, responses to the statements that comprise ATTITUDE fall into three groups: 1) a majority of all three districts agree; 2) a majority of the inst/materials and Dade districts agree, while a

minority of salary supplement districts agree; and 3) mixed results, with a significant percentage from all three district categories choosing undecided.

Asked to agree or disagree with the statement, "the merit schools program has a positive impact on my school", 80% of principals and 72% of teachers from materials only schools agreed; in Dade county, from participating schools the percentages were 71 and 61 in agreement, respectively, while the remaining salary supplement schools indicated a 56% and 54% agreement (A-4-b; B-4-b). Reward for good work is occurring, although Dade County responses are more positive (70% teachers and 73% principals in agreement) than other salary supplement districts (57% and 50% in agreement) and the materials districts (44% and 67% in agreement)(A-4-c; B-4-c). School administrators overwhelmingly disagree that the program has had a corrupting influence, as percentages range from 67-77 (B-5-n). Also, a majority of administrators feel the program does not push schools towards trivial learning (58-71%)(B-4-d).

Responses to other statements, though, clearly reflect the more negative attitude held by teachers and principals in the salary supplement districts than by their counterparts in the other two district categories. A majority of teachers and administrators in Dade feel that the program is " a credible one for school improvement" (57% and 62%), as they do in the materials only districts (55% for both). In the salary supplement districts, however, the agreement is much lower (40% and 38%)(A-

5-1; B-5-1). Similarly, a majority of administrators in Dade and materials only districts feel the program reflects a "wise use of state funds" (52% and 55%), while their counterparts in salary supplement districts do not agree, with only 26% in agreement (A-5-k; B-5-k).

A third category of responses suggests a mixed, undecided or negative view. A majority of administrators in materials only schools agree that the program is fair to all schools, while a majority in the salary supplement schools disagree (52% in both cases) For Dade, the results are mixed, with 42% in agreement and 38% in disagreement (B-4-1). Among teachers, the same statement also produces mixed results, as agreement percentages range from 25-41 and disagreement percentages range from 25-49 (A-4-a). For both teachers and administrators, salary supplement districts were more negative, with materials only districts the most positive.

Overall, a high percentage disagree that the program should be dropped, with percentages ranging from 43-72% (A-5-o;B-6-o), but teachers, more so than administrators, feel that some modification is needed (teachers: 47-62% in agreement; principals: 27-33% in agreement)(A-5-p;B-6-p).

District Administrators support the general positive view of the program, with 46% agreeing that teachers feel positively towards the program (D-1-4). Similarly, 62% agree that their district's program is working well (D-1-6). In response to the statement that the program "has added little to the activities

and behaviors that teachers and principals typically perform in our district", 54% disagreed (D-1-2).

IMPACT OF SOCIOECONOMIC LEVEL AND MINORITY MEMBERSHIP PATTERNS OF MERIT SCHOOLS

The state legislature stipulated that the opportunity to earn merit school status should not be related to ethnic make-up or socioeconomic status of the students attending schools. To answer the question of whether the patterns of merit school winners in any way is reflective of the socioeconomic status or percent of minority students in a school, we examined the reported data of individual school winners provided by each district and the DOE annual report of racial/ethnic category and economic status by school within district. Following the procedure used by DOE, socioeconomic status (SES) was determined by the percentage of enrolled students that are eligible for free or reduced lunch.

The percentages of students classified as minority and the percentage of student eligible for free and reduced lunch vary greatly from district to district. In addition, the percentages of students that are eligible for free and reduced lunch varies by school level. The percentages are always higher in elementary schools and lowest in high schools. For these reasons, the data had to be reviewed independently for each district and for each school level within a district.

Because of the different number of schools in districts of different sizes, the patterns were reviewed differently for very small and small school districts, moderately small districts, and large and moderate sized districts (see tables in Appendix I). The method of review also varied by level of school because of changes in the number of schools.

In several cases, schools were ranked within level of school and district. SES rank was based on the percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch with the lowest percentage given the rank of 1 and the highest percentage given the greater number; for example, 6th of 6 schools. Rank in percentage minority was based on the percent of other than white (non-hispanic) as reported by DOE. The school with the lowest percentage of minorities was given the rank of 1. The school with the highest percent of minorities was given the larger number; for example, 15th of 15 schools.

In the very small and small school districts, winning merit school status seems to be shared equally among the schools at each level. The exception would be Putnam county for which the pattern reflects no consistent bias.

In the moderately small county school districts, the patterns show very little systematic bias. In Leon and Marion counties, however, the elementary schools with higher percentages of students that qualify for free and reduced lunch and those with higher percentages of minority students tend to win merit school status slightly less often. There may be some other

explanation for these weak relationships.

We obtained data for some of the larger districts. Seminole and Orange counties award high percentages of schools every year and there were no consistent patterns that suggest bias. We did not have a list of winning schools provided by Pinellas county, but they awarded most all of their schools every year and thus there was little opportunity for bias. There was no evidence of bias in the data from Pasco county. The data from Brevard and Volusia counties indicate that the distribution of awards to schools in those counties were slightly in favor of the schools with higher SES and lower percentages of minority students. But in both cases, the relationships are very weak overall, although they are more evident at one level of school in each county. Again, there may be a number of other reasons for the observed results.

For the most part, the evidence suggests that there is a weak relationship between SES status and percent minority and the likelihood of winning merit school status. The pattern is not consistent from school district to school district. In several districts there is a tendency for schools with lower SES (higher rank numbers) and larger percentages of minority students (higher rank numbers) to win merit school awards less often, while in others the pattern is reversed and in others there seems to be no pattern at all.

As can be expected, in those districts that award a very high percentage of schools as merit school every year, there is

no relationship. The tendency for a relationship between merit school winners and SES or percentage minority has a greater potential for being exhibited in districts that award smaller percentages of schools each year. For the most part, it is in those districts that the weak relationships can be observed.

INCREASED STUDENT LEARNING

Our analysis indicates that the program is perceived as having a positive impact on student performance, although the extent to which this occurs varies from school to school and from district to district. Many educators believe that the activities required by the merit schools program, including those leading to increased standardized test scores, would be occurring in the absence of the program. Yet other educators believe that the program sensitizes teachers and administrators toward accomplishing those activities more fully than if the program did not exist. The fact that there is a visible reward for increasing test scores and/or increasing the percentage of students that pass a physical fitness test, for example, does make a difference in the amount of time and attention given to these activities. Furthermore, that the merit schools program requires that teachers choose these activities through a participatory process further ensures more successful accomplishment.

Standardized Achievement Test Scores

The current requirement that meritorious schools must demonstrate student achievement above an expected level on a standardized achievement test has not been successful. The requirement is based on the false assumption that student performance or academic achievement and standardized test scores are synonymous. Student academic ability and standardized test scores are often very different constructs.

It is easy to increase test scores without improving student learning. Once educators learn that their work is to be judged almost entirely by scores on such tests, they devise methods that result in higher test scores. Sometimes the test score rather than student learning becomes the major goal. The distinction between instruction on test taking skills and teaching the test may become blurred. Test companies add to the problem by convincing schools that the items on a norm-referenced standardized test can serve a criterion-referenced function. Classroom lists of items missed by students this year indicate to teachers which items to focus on for the following year. It becomes a major problem when copies of the tests are available to anyone who makes an effort to obtain a copy.

It is now well understood that high stakes pressure to increase scores on standardized tests results in invalid scores. The test items change only once in every five to ten years. Over time, the test items become a major part of the formal and

informal curriculum. The norm based scores become meaningless.

To the extent that a given district equates performance with test scores, and there is a high degree of competition to become a merit school within that district, a situation of "high stakes testing pressure" may result. This is one reason the responses to the statement "student learning has improved" elicit a much lower agreement from educators from the other salary supplement schools than from educators from the materials only schools. In the former, only 37% of teachers agree, and only 32% of principals agree (A-1-a;B-1-a). For the latter group, 50% of teachers and 54% of principals agree. Additional insight is provided by the similar pattern of responses found to two other statements. A minority of teachers and principals from the other salary supplement schools agree that "more time is used for learning activities" (40% and 25%, respectively)(A-1-c;B-1-c), while the percentages of agreement are much higher in materials only schools (51% and 41%). In contrast, more teachers and principals from the salary supplement schools agree that "more time is used to teach test taking skills" (69% and 65%) than in the materials only schools (55% and 44%)(A-2-j;B-2-j). These results seem to indicate that more pressure on the standardized tests is closely related to less student learning.

Even though Dade County distributes merit school awards in the form of salary supplements, the responses from teachers and administrators are much more positive than their counterparts in other salary supplement schools. In fact, 52% of teachers and

53% of principals from participating schools agree that student learning has improved. In part the explanation for this result may be that the Dade County program is unique in that it requires each participating school to develop a year long school improvement plan. In doing so, it broadens the definition of student learning to include these criteria. Student learning is improved when, for example, the entire school works on a year long world geography project.

In contrast, in many of the other salary supplement schools, these other criteria are not emphasized nor given much importance in terms of how they increase student learning. Increasing the student participation in a science fair, for example, may be accomplished by simply assigning the project as a course requirement for a larger number of students than the previous year.

The Dade County program, though, does have unique problems. While much of the positive benefit is probably related to the year long school improvement projects, merit schools are selected only on the basis of increases in standardized test scores. Teachers and principals are not aware of the procedure used to review test scores and receive no feedback about their relative standing on the test score improvement. One possible additional problem is reflected in the Dade administrator response to the statement, "teachers tend to transfer from other schools to schools that often earn merit school awards". The percentage of agreement from Dade was 24%, much higher than responses from the

other categories of districts: 4%-8% (B-2-o).

Another set of potential problems were illustrated by comments from teachers in a small sample of schools we visited. In one of the schools, teachers believed that merit schools were selected on the basis of the presentation of their special program and did not know that test sores even counted. In another school, teachers worked very hare on teaching test taking skills and other activities related to improving test scores every year in order to ensure that test sores rose so the school would earn merit school status. The teachers in the latter school did not put a major effort into their year long program every year. They varied the magnitude of their efforts from year to year in order to avoid teacher burn out. They believed that the extra $500 above the first $500 merit school award was only worth the effort every few years.

Because of the lessened emphasis on standardized test importance in the materials only schools, the definition of student learning is expanded. Even if the materials schools do not choose a school wide project, they are more likely to appreciate the benefits that additional materials and equipment (e.g., new computer hardware, science materials, library materials, etc.) have for student learning. It is also more likely that teachers and principals in these schools will understand the connection between increasing the number of volunteer hours, for example, and increased student learning.

The Statistical Model Requirement

In spite of many mathematical and educational problems associated with assessing school performance with standardized achievement scores, some districts are satisfied with the models they have developed to fulfill the current standardized test score requirement of the program. There are serious mathematical and educational problems with most all of the models that are in current use. For example in districts that compare student scores from year to year, there is seldom any consideration of schools that have for many years produced students who score above what can be expected and thus are meritorious by definition. Such schools may not achieve merit school status because they are already achieving the desired goal and have not demonstrated even greater performance improvement. Some districts recognize these problems but are willing to live with them in order to participate in the program.. Other districts have experienced serious problems in creating and implementing appropriate models.

The fact that most every district has developed a unique model speaks to the lack of a clear acceptable strategy for establishing appropriate expected levels of performance on standardized achievement test. Unfortunately, the strategies used in some districts that reduce problems associated with ceiling effects and a constant need to produce scores even above indicators of excellence have not been shared among districts. Without sharing of experiences and strategies, grossly

inappropriate models have been adhered to because of problems related to new negations with bargaining units and approval by the DOE.

IMPROVED INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

The composition of the index INSTRUCT reflects four statements that measure, in different ways, the extent to which instructional practices are improved because of the merit schools program. These statements focus on the materials and equipment used for instruction, the effectiveness of the instructional practices used, whether the teachers devote more time to school, and whether, as a result, more time is spent devoted to student learning.

Of the four statements, there is only overwhelming agreement for improved equipment and materials, and this is only from the materials only districts (teachers: 72% agreement; administrators: 86% agreement). This result is clearly understandable, as in these districts there is a clear linkage between the program and the purchase of additional equipment and materials. Likewise, it is not surprising that responses from the other districts do not share this level of agreement, since merit school funds are awarded as salary supplements. Neither a majority of teachers nor administrators in either Dade or in the other salary supplement districts agree, with percentage agreement ranging from 32-44 (A-2-h;B-2-h).

To the extent that improved equipment and materials results in teachers using improved instructional practices, there is some indication that this is occurring in the materials only districts, as 61% of teachers and 57% of administrators agree more effective instruction is occurring. The responses from the other two district categories are not as clear cut. Although 45% of teachers from Dade agree, 35% of them are undecided. It is not clear in the minds of over one third of the Dade teachers whether or not the merit schools program results in the adoption of more effective instructional practices. Educators in the other salary supplement districts are surprisingly split, as more administrators disagree than agree (41% to 37%), while more teachers agree than disagree (47% to 26%)(A-1-d;B-1-d). The responses from the District Administrators support this mixed view. Although 46% agree with the statement that the program "is achieving its primary goal of improving instructional practices in our district", a significant 31% disagree (D-1-3).

When asked to respond to the statement "more student time is used for learning activities", the patterns of responses are similar, with educators from the materials only districts more positive than negative (teachers: 51% agreement; administrators: 41% agreement). Likewise, Dade educators show a positive response (teachers: 47% agreement; administrators: 49% agreement. Again, administrators in the other salary supplement districts are more negative than positive (46% disagree to 25% agree), while teachers responded in the opposite fashion, with 40% agreement

and 30% disagreement (A-1-c;B-1-c).

The final statement for this index may be the most interesting, as it taps the amount of additional time a teacher may devote to school activities as a result of the merit schools program. In every district category, teachers feel they spend more time than is perceived by administrators. In Dade, a majority of teachers and administrators agree teachers spend more time (67% and 55%). This result is not surprising given that the school wide projects undertaken would seem much more time consuming than fulfilling the optional criteria chosen by other districts. This conclusion is supported by the negative view of administrators in the salary supplement schools (54% disagreement versus 32% agreement) and the high level of undecided responses from their counterparts in the materials only districts (31% undecided). Teachers, on the other hand, in both salary supplement and materials only districts, responded much more positively.

District administrators generally support the view that instructional practices are improving because of the merit schools program. The percentage in agreement, though, is not in the majority (46%) and there is a significant percentage that disagrees (31%)(D-1-3).

INCREASED SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Overwhelmingly, the results from all sources indicate that

the merit schools program produces increased teamwork among teachers, and among teachers and administrators, and has increased teacher involvement in decision making. In almost every case, principals and administrators are more in agreement than teachers. For those districts other than Dade that provide salary supplements, there is a greater amount of disagreement that these school based management results have occurred, with administrators disagreement more than teachers.

In terms of responses to the statements that comprise the TEAMWRK index, the responses to the statement "teamwork among teachers is better", produced percentages in agreement among all three district categories of teachers that ranged from 51-57, while for principals the range was 46-76 (A-1-f;B-1-g). Likewise, teachers agree that teamwork among teachers and administrators is better (48-55% in agreement), while administrators agree to an even greater extent (50-74%)(A-2-g;B-1-g). In response to a series of statements concerning teacher involvement in decision making, a majority of teachers from both Dade County and the materials only districts agreed that teachers are more involved in choosing instructional methods (56% and 59%); making decisions about the purchase of instructional resources and equipment (51% and 78%); school goals (65% and 60%); and decisions about school activities and practices (54% and 53%). Likewise, for school principals and administrators, the percentage of agreement for the same items produced an agreement range of 56% to 79% (A-3-a to e; B-3-a to e).

It is noteworthy that the educators from other salary supplement schools were more negative. For example, only 32% of teachers agreed that teachers are more involved in decisions concerning school policy and procedures (A-3-c). Among administrators from these districts, the responses reflect a much smaller percentage of undecided opinion and a much higher percentage of disagreement. For the same statement, 40% of administrators disagreed that teachers help decide school policy and procedures, compared to 14% from Dade and 23% from materials only districts (B-3-c). In terms of the purchase of instructional resources and equipment, the corresponding percentages of disagreement for administrators were 38% from salary supplement districts, 17% from Dade and 7% from materials only districts.

In conclusion, there is a consistent majority agreement among teachers from the materials only districts to all four items. It seems likely that the merit schools program is achieving its goal of improving instructional practices in these districts. The Dade program reflects relatively positive responses as well. The picture in the other salary supplement districts, however, is unclear, as there is a much higher percentage of undecided responses along with a lower percentage of agreement. In addition, responses to the district administrator survey reflect a mixed result as the same number agree as do disagree (42%) that principals and teachers are interacting to a greater extent because of the merit schools

program.

INCREASED ECONOMIC INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS AND OTHER SCHOOL PERSONNEL

There is a very clear connection between the distribution of merit school moneys and the positive or negative acceptance of the program by teachers and administrators. In those districts in which a higher percentage of schools are designated as meritorious, there is a greater acceptance of the merit schools program. As indicated by Table 8, for the most part, these districts distribute their funds primarily for the purchase of instructional materials. There is much less of a sense of inter-school competition in these districts, because the merit school program is established so that any improvement in performance or even a maintenance of the current level of performance results in merit school designation.

In those districts that provide primarily salary supplements, the program is viewed much more negatively. There is a heightened sense of competition among these schools, because a much smaller number of schools is likely to receive a merit school designation. There is also a greater likelihood that high stakes testing pressure is perceived in a negative fashion by teachers and principals in these schools.

Another factor must be considered: the amount of salary supplement received by each teacher in a merit school. As

indicated by Table 12, Dade County teachers have generally received a much higher amount of a salary supplement than teachers in other salary supplement districts. Teachers in some of Dade schools may feel that the amount of extra effort required by the merit schools program may be worth the minimum of $500, with the possibility of receiving $1000. In districts where teachers received less than $200 a much more negative view of the program is common.

COMPETITION AMONG SCHOOLS WITHIN EACH DISTRICT CATEGORY

Most educators agree that the merit school program causes a sense of competition among schools. The perception that this competition exists, however, varies from district to district. Educators from the materials only districts reported less of an awareness of competition than the other two district categories, and were less likely to view competition in a positive sense.

A majority of teachers and administrators from Dade and other salary supplement districts agree that the sense of competition exists (Dade: 57% and 65%; salary supplement: 75% and 68%). For the materials only districts, however, teachers report an agreement of 49%, while more administrators disagree than agree (48% to 41%)(A-8-a;B-8-a). Similarly, a majority of Dade and salary supplement educators feel the district promotes this competition (53% to 63% range), while only 32% to 44% agree and 33% to 50% disagree from the materials only districts (A-8-b;B-8-

TABLE 12

Dollar Amounts of Full Share per Teacher
in Salary Supplement Districts
(rounded to nearest dollar)

County		YEAR 84/85	85/86	86/87	87/88	88/89
Baker		219	90	277	155	1090
Bay			800	500	150	150
Brevard		992	371	330	228	166
Calhoun (approx)			400	700	600	600
Dade	Q_2	1208	637	620	570	500
	E^2	2416	1274	1240	1140	1000
Hardee (approx)		1053	405		200	
Indian River		450	329	300	270	250
Nassau		543	605	567	369	329
Pasco		403	362	268	226	253
Putnam (approx)		700	500	400	400	300
Sarasota					100	100
Sumter				895	1829	575
Suwannee		355	313	122	129	

Data are based on information reported on the District Administrator's Questionnaire

b). Uniformally, less than a majority agree that students are aware of this competition (15% to 40%), but only in materials only do a majority of educators disagree (57% to 64%) (A-8-c;B-8-d). Again, an overwhelming majority of educators in Dade and the salary supplement districts agree that teachers are aware of the sense of competition (71% to 80%) while in the materials only districts a majority of teachers but a minority of administrators agree (55% and 40%) (A-8-d;B-8-d).

A majority of teachers and administrators from all three district categories agree that the competition focuses on the standardized test scores (72%-89%) and the other criteria (59%-71%)(A-8-f,g;B-8-f,g), but only a minority of teachers and all administrators except in Dade feel this competition is good (teachers: 30%-44% agree; administrators: 27% to 59% agree). Relating competition to increased student achievement is seen positively only in Dade (A-8-h;A-9-i;B-8-h,i). In terms of increased cooperation among school employees, a majority of administrators agree that competition causes cooperation (54% to 70%), while only in Dade do a majority of teachers agree (A-9-k;B-9-k).

In summary, the sense of competition generated by the Merit Schools Program is viewed most positively in Dade County. For the materials only districts, competition is viewed as having the least amount of impact, and this impact is not seen as positive. In the salary supplement districts, competition is present, but is often seen more negatively than positively.

TEACHER TRANSFERS TO MERIT SCHOOLS FROM NON MERIT SCHOOLS

There is little evidence that teachers transfer to schools designated as merit schools from schools that are not identified as meritorious. We found no agreement with this by any administrator interviewed. Principals and school administrators overwhelmingly disagreed with the statement that teachers tend to transfer to merit schools, with responses ranging from 55-76% (B-2-o). Only in Dade, with a high of 24% in agreement, may there be some connection between the program and teacher transfers. District administrators strongly supported this evidence as 84% disagreed with a similar statement (D-1-9).

These results are supported by other relevant facts. In those districts in which there are a high percentage of schools awarded merit school status, there would be no incentive for transfers based on the program. In addition, teacher transfers occur for a multitude of reasons, with merit school status obviously one of the least important.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our analysis suggests that the merit schools program has had a positive impact in many respects. In general, teachers and administrators throughout Florida have a positive view of the program. Many educators also agree that the program provides a positive incentive for teachers to improve their instructional

practices. For the most part, districts are not biasing the awarding of merit school status away from those schools with a high percentage of lower level socioeconomic students. The program is decidedly helping schools to adopt school based management practices.

There are some improvements, however, that could be implemented to help solve some of the weaknesses of the program. It is impossible to ascertain whether or not student learning is improving because of the program since the program requires the use of standardized achievement test scores to be interpreted by a statistical model that in many cases is not valid. The program could be altered to allow districts to adopt their own measures of student learning that would constitute alternatives to standardized achievement tests. Florida Department of Education (DOE) staff could provide technical assistance to districts in this effort.

We discovered that many district personnel had little knowledge of how the program was implemented in other districts. Many educators expressed misconceptions concerning program requirements. We strongly urge DOE staff to provide mechanisms by which educators from across the state can interact with each other and share information concerning what practices are most effective.

The optional criteria need to be revisited as well. In some districts, the criteria were fixed by the district, and reflected activities that were relatively easy for teachers and

administrators to meet. In other districts, however, the requirement that improvement over a base line or last year's results be demonstrated was causing concern. Educators complained that since they were already operating at a high level, it would be very difficult to improve their scores on the required criteria. Although no cheating was mentioned during our interviews, documentation concerning the achievement of the optional criteria was not reviewed by district level personnel in almost all districts.

To help solve these difficulties, several approaches can be suggested. First, districts could be encouraged to identify optional criteria that stimulate teachers and administrators to engage in activities that they would not otherwise have done. Second, more districts need to allow greater discretion to individual buildings in terms of what specific optional criteria should be chosen. Third, districts should require the submission of documentation to a district level office, which in turn would submit a sample of this documentation to DOE.

The program is not providing adequate economic incentive for teachers in most districts that provide salary supplements. In these districts as well, the sense of competition fostered by the program is viewed negatively. Also, in such districts, the percentage of schools identified as meritorious is likely to be relatively small (no more than 25-35%). Unless the program can be funded at a high enough level so that every teacher receives a salary supplement amount that is viewed positively, districts

should be encouraged to distribute the award money in ways other than salary supplements. The most positive view of the program is found in those districts where teachers choose to spend the money on equipment and materials only. For these districts as well, the sense of competition is the lowest, and the percentage of schools provided merit school status is the highest. A future, more effective merit schools program perhaps should eliminate salary supplements.

The major benefit of the merit schools program seems to have little relevance to the legislative intention of improving instructional practices through providing economic incentives to teachers. The program permits schools to identify local needs and use the resources generated by the program to meet these needs. This benefit is most clearly seen in materials only districts.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS USED AS A GUIDE FOR THE PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

1. How has the QIIP program affected your school?
   (Can you tell me more about that?)

2. How, if at all, has it affected the way you work with teachers?

3. How, if at all, has it affected the way teachers work?

4. How, if at all, has it affected the way administrators from other buildings work together?

5. How are the school's QIIP goals determined?

6. In this building word term is used for the QIIP or Merit Schools Program?
   .....
   If classroom teachers were asked to play a word association game by listing words that first come to mind, what would they say after hearing .....?

7. Some people say that schools are doing a better job because test scores are getting higher. Other people say that as test scores go up, real learning declines.
   Why do you think one point of view is more correct than the other?

8. What happens to the QIIP program funds?

   (how much, all state funds?, any local funds?)

9. If you could make major changes in the QIIP program , what changes would you make?

10. Title of position _____.
    Years: at this school _____; in the county _____.

11. What else is important to know in order to understand the process or impact of the QIIP program in your county?

CLASSROOM TEACHER

1. How has the QIIP program affected your school?
   (Can you tell me more about that?)

2. How, if at all, has it affected the way you work with other teachers?

3. How, if at all, has it affected the way administrators work with teachers?

4. What kinds of things have happened to make you think that standardized test scores are important?

5. In what ways, if at all, have the tests influenced what content you teach and how you teach?

6. How are the school's QIIP goals determined?

7. In this building word term is used for the QIIP or Merit Schools Program?
   .....
   If classroom teachers were asked to play a word association game by listing words that first come to mind, what would they say after hearing .....?

8. Some people say that schools are doing a better job because test scores are getting higher. Other people say that as test scores go up, real learning declines.
   Why do you think one point of view is more correct than the other?

9. What happens to the QIIP program funds?

10. If you could make major changes in the QIIP program , what changes would you make?

11. Title of position _____.
    Years: at this school _____; in the county _____.

12. What else is important to know in order to understand the process or impact of the QIIP program in your county?

APPENDIX B

MAIL QUESTIONNAIRES

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS' QUESTIONNAIRE

During interviews, school administrators and classroom teachers have reported many opinions about changes caused by the QUIIP or Merit Schools Program. They have reported positive changes, negative changes, no change at all, and many opinions about topics related to the process of identifying and awarding merit schools.

Directions: Based on your personal experience, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Fill in the space that goes with your answer.

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = undecided
4 = agree
5 = strongly agree

	STRONGLY DISAGREE = 1 to 5 = STRONGLY AGREE
1. Because of the merit schools program, principals and teachers are interacting to a greater extent on a wide range of decisions.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
2. The merit schools program has added little to the to the activities and behaviors that teachers and principals typically perform in our district.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
3. The merit schools program is achieving its primary goal of improving instructional practices in our district.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
4. Overall, there is a positive feeling among most teachers toward the Merit Schools Program.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
5. Because of the pressure caused by the consequences of the standardized test scores that are part of the Merit Schools Program, inappropriate procedures methods are used by teachers and principals.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
6. Our district's merit school program is working very well.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
7. District testing experts believe the statistical model that interprets the standardized test part of the merit schools criteria is a valid model.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
8. There have been few problems with implementing the merit schools program.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
9. Transfers by teachers to merit schools have increased since the merit school program has begun.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
10. The merit schools program:	
a. should be dropped	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
b. should be kept, if modified	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
c. should continue in its present form.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

(over)

In item 11 below, there are five statements concerning the benefits of the Merit schools Program. Please rank these five, marking (1) as the most important, (2) as the next most important, etc.

11. Rank order the benefits of the Merit Schools Program.

a. The additional dollars it provides to teachers and/or schools	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
b. The increased interaction between teachers and principals	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
c. The improvement in standardized test scores	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
d. The increased community involvement	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
d. The increased school pride	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

12. If any schools in your district have chosen not to participate in the program, why do you believe they have not participated?

---

13. If the district uses any methods to audit each school's report of achievement on the optional criteria, please briefly describe the audit procedure.

---

14. Please complete the following table. If a complete set of records is not available, please provide your best estimates.

	84/85	85/86	86/87	87/88	88/89
a. Number of schools participating in the merit schools program.					
b. Number of schools who qualified as meritorious (if appropriate, indicate by level of merit)					
c. Number of schools that failed to meet: standardized test criteria					
optional criteria					
both criteria					
d. The dollar amount of a full share per teacher					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN ANSWERING SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' OPINIONS

The State's code number for your school district is _____.

OTHER COMMENTS:

ADMINISTRATORS' QUESTIONNAIRE

During interviews, school administrators have reported many opinions about changes caused by the QUIIP or Merit Schools Program. They have reported positive changes, negative changes, no change at all, and many opinions about topics related to the process of identifying and awarding merit schools.

Directions: Based on your personal experience, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Fill in the space that goes with your answer.

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = undecided
4 = agree
5 = strongly agree

STRONGLY DISAGREE = 1 to 5 = STRONGLY AGREE

BECAUSE OF THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM:

I. SCHOOL CONDITIONS

a) Student learning has improved.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	1
b) Teachers devote more hours working for the school.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	2
c) More student time is used for learning activities.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	3
d) Teachers use more effective instructional methods.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	4
e) Student attendance is better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	5
f) Teamwork among teachers is better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	6
g) Teamwork among teachers and administrators is better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	7
h) The instructional materials or equipment is better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	8
i) Students take standardized tests more seriously.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	9
j) More time is used to teach test taking skills.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	10
k) Teachers require student participation in activities related to merit school goals.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	b 12
l) Parent participation in school activities is better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	13
m) Community pride in the school is better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	14
n) Communication among administrations from different schools is better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	15
0) Teachers tend to transfer from other schools to schools that often earn merit school awards.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	16

II. TEACHERS ARE MORE INVOLVED IN DECISIONS ABOUT:

a) instructional methods	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	b 18
b) purchase of instructional resources and equipment	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	19
c) school policy and procedures	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	20
d) school goals	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	21
e) other grade level or school activities and practices.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	22

Express your personal opinion about the Merit Schools Program by indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

III. THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM:	STRONGLY DISAGREE = 1 to 5 = STRONGLY AGREE	b
a) is fair to all schools.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	24
b) has a positive impact on my school.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	25
c) provides educators a reward for good work.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	26
d) has pushed schooling toward trivial learning.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	27
e) promotes practices that diminish the quality of education while test scores increase.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	28
f) is very easy, requiring no extra effort.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	29
g) rewards the most improved rather than the highest quality schools.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	b 31
h) uses test scores that give false information about student learning.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	32
i) uses other school criteria that are important.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	33
j) allows politics to get in the way of true teaching quality awards.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	34
k) has resulted in wise use of state funds.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	35
l) is a credible program for school improvement.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	365
m) requires an administrator to devote more time to leading school activities.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	b 38
n) results in competition that has corrupted schools.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	39
o) should be dropped altogether.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	40
p) should be continued, only if modified.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	41
q) should be continued as is.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	42

b

IV. Background Information

a) What term best describes your school:
Elementary (1)
Middle School/Junior High (2)
High School (3) 44

b) How many years of school administrative experience do you have? _____ 45-6

c) To your knowledge, for how many years has your school participated in the Merit Schools Program? _____ 47

d) How many times has your school been a Merit (QUIIP) School? _____ 48

e) How many years have you been an administrator at your current school? _____ 49-50

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN ANSWERING SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' OPINIONS b

The State's code number for your school district is _____. 52-3

COMMENTS: b

55-8

CLASSROOM TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE
(form A)

During interviews, classroom teachers have reported many opinions about the changes caused by the QUIIP or Merit Schools Program. Teachers have reported positive changes, negative changes, no change at all, and many opinions about topics related to the process of identifying and awarding merit schools.

Directions: Based on your personal experience, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Fill in the space that goes with your answer.

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = undecided
4 = agree
5 = strongly agree

STRONGLY DISAGREE = 1 to 5 = STRONGLY AGREE

BECAUSE OF THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM:

I. School Conditions

a) Student learning has improved.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	1
b) Teachers devote more hours working for the school.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	2
c) More student time is used for learning activities.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	3
d) Teachers use more effective instructional methods.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	4
e) Student attendance is better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	5
f) Teamwork among teachers is better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	6
g) Teamwork among teachers and administrators is better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	7
h) The instructional materials or equipment is better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	8
i) Students take standardized tests more seriously.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	9
j) More time is used to teach test taking skills.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	10
k) Teachers require student participation in activities related to merit school goals.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	11 12
l) Parent participation in school activities is better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	13
m) Community pride in the school is better.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	14

II. TEACHERS ARE MORE INVOLVED IN DECISIONS ABOUT:

a) instructional methods	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	16
b) purchase of instructional resources and equipment	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	17
c) school policy and procedures	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	18
d) school goals	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	19
e) other grade level or school activities and practices.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	20

Express your personal opinion about the Merit Schools Program by indicating the extent to which agree or disagree with the following statements.

III. THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM:	STRONGLY DISAGREE = 1 to 5 = STRONGLY AGREE					
a) is fair to all schools.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	22
b) has a positive impact on my school.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	23
c) provides teachers a reward for good work.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	24
d) has pushed schooling toward trivial learning.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	25
e) promotes practices that diminish the quality of education while test scores increase.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	27
f) is very easy, requiring no extra effort.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	28
g) rewards the most improved rather than the highest quality schools.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	29
h) uses test scores that give false information about student learning.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	30
i) uses other school criteria that are important.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	31
j) allows politics to get in the way of true teaching quality awards.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	33
k) has resulted in wise use of state funds.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	34
l) is a credible program for school improvement.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	35
o) results in competition that has corrupted schools.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	36
p) should be dropped altogether.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	37
q) should be continued, if modified.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	38
r) should be continued as is.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	39

IV. Background Information

a) What term best describes your school:
Elementary (1)
Middle School/Junior High (2)
High School (3) 40

b) How many years of full time teaching experience do you have? _____ 41-2

c) To your knowledge, for how many years has your school participated in the Merit Schools Program? _____ 43

d) How many times has your school been a Merit (QUIIP) School? _____ 44

e) How many years have you taught at your current school? _____ 45-6

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN ANSWERING SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ABOUT TEACHERS' OPINIONS

The State's code number for your school district is _____. 48-9

COMMENTS: 51-4

CLASSROOM TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE
(form B)

During interviews, classroom teachers have reported many opinions about the changes caused by the QUIIP or Merit Schools Program. Teachers have reported positive changes, negative changes, no change at all, and many opinions about topics related to the process of identifying and awarding merit schools.

Directions: Based on your personal experience, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Fill in the space that goes with your answer.

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = undecided
4 = agree
5 = strongly agree

STRONGLY DISAGREE = 1 to 5 = STRONGLY AGREE

I. THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM:

a) is fair to all schools.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	1
b) has a positive impact on my school.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	2
c) provides teachers a reward for good work.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	3
d) has pushed schooling toward trivial learning.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	4
e) promotes practices that diminish the quality of education while test scores increase.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	5
f) is very easy, requiring no extra effort.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	6
g) rewards the most improved rather than the highest quality schools.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	7
h) uses test scores that give false information about student learning.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	8
i) uses other school criteria that are important.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	9
j) allows politics to get in the way of true teaching quality awards.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	10 11
k) has resulted in wise use of state funds.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	12
l) is a credible program for school improvement.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	13
o) results in competition that has corrupted schools.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	14
p) should be dropped altogether.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	15
q) should be continued, if modified.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	16
r) should be continued as is.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	17

II. STANDARDIZED TESTS

Standardized tests such as CTBS, CAT, CAP, Iowa, etc. are given and used in a variety of ways within different schools. To what extent do you agree that the following statements describe practices in your school?

IN MY SCHOOL:	STRONGLY DISAGREE = 1 to 5 = STRONGLY AGREE					
a) the curricula are designed to teach the content on the test in order to match what is taught and tested.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	19
b) teachers are <u>prohibited</u> from reviewing test content.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	20
c) items from the tests are used (without modification) on other tests or student exercises.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	21
d) items from the tests are slightly modified, then used on other tests or student exercises.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	22
e) items on the tests are used as models for item format when writing other tests or student exercises.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	23
f) experienced teachers remember items from the test and focus part of their instruction on those items.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	24
g) test administration procedures are followed exactly as printed.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	25

IV. Background Information

a) What term best describes your school:

Elementary (1)
Middle School/Junior High (2)
High School (3) 27

b) How many years of full time teaching experience do you have? _____ 28-9

c) To your knowledge, for how many years has your school participated in the Merit Schools Program? _____ 30

d) How many times has your school been a Merit (QUIIP) School? _____ 31

e) How many years have you taught at your current school? _____ 32-3

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN ANSWERING SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ABOUT TEACHERS' OPINIONS

The State's code number for your school district is _____. 35-6

<u>COMMENTS</u>: 38-41

STATE ASSESSMENT OF THE FLORIDA QUALITY INSTRUCTION INCENTIVES PROGRAM (QUIIP) commonly known as the MERIT SCHOOLS PROGRAM

SUPPLEMENT TO QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete this supplement to the questionnaire. After you have answered the items, insert the supplement between the two middle pages. Then fold and return the completed questionnaire and supplement.

Focus of additional concern: Does the Merit Schools Program generate competition among schools and what are the results?

Directions: Based on your personal experience, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Fill in the space that goes with your answer.

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = undecided
4 = agree
5 = strongly agree

	STRONGLY DISAGREE = 1 to 5 = STRONGLY AGREE
ECAUSE OF THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM	
a) There is a sense of competition among schools.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
b) The school district promotes a sense of competition among schools.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
c) Students are aware of a sense of competition.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
d) Teachers are aware of a sense of competition.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
e) Merit School competition among schools is good.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

TOP! If you answered answered (1), (2), or (3) to all of the items above, do not continue. If you answered agree (4) or strongly agree (5) to one or more of the items above, please continue.

f) Competition focuses on standardized test scores.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
g) Competition focuses on other Merit School criteria.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
h) Competition among schools helps to improve student scores on standardized achievement tests.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
i) Competition among schools helps to improve student academic achievement in general.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
j) Competition among schools helps to improve student achievement of other important school objectives.	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
k) Competition among schools helps to improve a sense of team cooperation among school employees (administrators, teachers, staff)	(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR EXTRA HELP WITH THIS STUDY

APPENDIX C

LETTER TO THE STAKEHOLDERS INCLUDING THE CONFERENCE TOPICS OF DISCUSSION AND THE CONFERENCE PROGRAM

MERIT SCHOOLS
STAKEHOLDERS CONFERENCE

April 26, 1990

Dear Stakeholder:

We have enclosed two types of information that you should review prior to the conference. The first is a document that summarizes state records about school district Merit School Program activities. The second consists of tabulations of the responses to the mailed surveys. The tabulations represent the results obtained from four survey instruments: two instruments mailed to a sample of teachers, one instrument mailed to a sample of school administrators, and one instrument mailed to the school district coordinator in each of the participating districts.

The two instruments mailed to teachers and the instrument mailed to school administrators contained many of the same items. The strategy permitted a comparison between responses on different instruments.

One of the enclosed tabulations compares responses of teachers and administrators. A second compares the responses of teachers from counties that use three different strategies for merit school awards. A third tabulation compares the responses of school administrators from counties that use three different strategies for merit school awards.

The tabulations of survey responses from teachers and administrators who work in different levels of schools (elementary, middle/jr. high, and high schools) will be available during the conference. Overall, the responses were very similar by level of school.

There are many interpretations and recommendations that may be considered during the conference. The topics for discussion will be open to whatever you consider to be important. However a few issues that seem to be of current interest to some legislators include the following:

Interpretations:

1. Is there evidence that the program has produced school improvement?

2. Is there evidence that teachers have become more involved with school based management?

3. Does the amount of a salary supplement award have an impact on the effectiveness of the program?

4. Do salary supplement awards have a larger or smaller influence on teachers efforts to improve schooling than school awards used for the materials and equipment?

5. Does the program stimulate school improvement in districts that award a high percentage of their schools?

6. Does the program work equally well at all school levels: elementary, middle/jr. high, high school?

7. Are standardized test scores a meaningful indicator of school effectiveness?

8. Have school districts created adequate models for identifying schools that produce students who score above expected levels on standardized achievement tests?

Potential actions:

9. Eliminate improved standardized achievement test scores as a criterion in the Merit School Program.

10. Require school districts to develop alternative indicators of improved school effectiveness.

11. Eliminate high schools from the Merit Schools program.

12. Require districts that provide salary supplements to give awards of at least $500, or some amount, even if it would limit the number of schools selected.

13. Charge the DOE with the responsibility of facilitating exchanges between districts related to indicators of effectiveness and strategies for achieving merit school goals.

14. Charge the DOE with the responsibility to monitor and approve strategies for identifying schools that are identified as merit schools.

We know that you will identify other issues that need to be discussed.

Thank you for taking the time to attend the stakeholders conference. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Lange
Educational Foundations
University of Central Florida

Wendell C. Lawther
Public Administration
University of Central Florida

FLORIDA'S MERIT SCHOOLS PROGRAM

HOW DOES IT FUNCTION AND WHAT IS ITS IMPACT?

STAKE HOLDERS CONFERENCE

THURSDAY & FRIDAY
MAY 10-11, 1990
Orlando, Florida

The University of Central Florida
CEBA II Building
College of Business Administration
Second Floor Room 209

Purposes:
- review preliminary findings of a state funded study of the Florida Quality Instruction Incentives Program
- assist in the interpretation of the findings
- participate in identifying recommendations for DOE and legislative consideration

Invited Participants:
School District Personnel
- program coordinators
- directors of testing
- principals
- teachers
- teacher union representatives

Department of Education Personnel
State Teacher Union Representatives
Legislative Staff Members
State Legislators

TRAVEL AND PER DIEM MUST BE PROVIDED BY PARTICIPANTS

CONFERENCE FORMAT AND SCHEDULE

THURSDAY MAY 10 — CEBA II Building -- Col. of Business Admin.
2nd Floor
Room 209
University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

12:30 p.m. - 1:00		Sign In
1:00 p.m.- 1:30	•	Introductions and Project Overview
	•	Assignment to Work Groups
1:30 p.m.- 3:30	•	Review of data or other information and prepare group preliminary reactions
	•	Identify special issues based on local experiences and/or study data
3:30 p.m.- 4:30	•	Presentations of group preliminary reactions and special issues

FRIDAY MAY 11

8:15 a.m.- 8:30	•	Assignment to New Work Groups
8:30 a.m.- 10:15	•	Share examples of success and concerns related to specific issues
	•	Formulate recommendations for refinement of the program
10:15 a.m.- 10:30		Break
10:30 a.m.- 11:30	•	Presentations of group recommendations and general discussion

APPENDIX D

STAKEHOLDERS' CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

MERIT SCHOOLS PROGRAM
STAKEHOLDERS' CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS
May 10-11, 1990

U. C. F. Coordinators
Wendell Lawther
Bob Lange
Diane Winston

D. O. E. Representatives
Rufus Ellis
Brian Curry

Brevard County
Sharon Vaughn
Joy Salamone

Marion County
Jim Noell
Mary Ann DeLong

Nassau County
Carolyn Parks
Mildred Campbell

Orange County
Lee Baldwin
John Hawco

Pasco County
Myndall Stanfill
Jim Davis
Steve Dubendorfer

Pinellas County
Steve Iachini
Kate Herrington
Brenda Leasure
Frank Garcia

St. Lucie County
Stephen Bouzianis
Darlene Dawson

Seminole County
Ernest Cowley
Ted Barker
Jim Dawson
Jim Elliott
Jim Neville

APPENDIX E

RESPONSE TO THE REPORT ENTITLED: FLORIDA'S QUALITY INSTRUCTION INCENTIVES PROGRAM: ALLOCATION PATTERNS OF MERIT SCHOOLS 1984-1989

MEMORANDUM

TO: Bryan Curry

From: Bob Lange and Wendell Lawther
UCF

Subject: Recommendations by Barbara White
Date: April 12, 1990

Dear Brian;

In accordance with your request, the following is our review of the recommendations found in in the report entitled: Florida's Quality Instruction Incentives Program: Allocation Patterns of Merit Schools - 1984-1989. We are basing our comments on:

1. review and analysis of district plans
2. review and analysis of records of award patterns
3. interviews with school administrators and teachers in a purposive sample of schools
4. a preliminary analysis of survey data obtained as part of our study of the Florida QUIIP or Merit Schools Program.

As implied in Barbara White's report, her recommendations are based on prior value orientations and a logical contingency analysis of district plans and records of awards. She had no information about what is happening in schools because of the program.

The recommendations reflect an accurate review of the plans submitted by each district. However, that analysis is too limited. There is no demonstrated congruency between a logical analysis of the plans and the impact of the Merit Schools Program on schools.

We believe that some of the assumptions implicit in the report have merit and others have not been demonstrated to be valid. Our data will challenge the beliefs that underlie some of the recommendations.

The following items examine each of the specific report recommendations in more detail.

(Item numbers correspond to recommendation numbers on page 18 of Barbara White's report.)

1. Name Change

Whether or not the name of the program should be changed is a value orientation. In most districts, the focus has long been on awarding improved schools and providing better

instructional materials and equipment to facilitate better student learning. The recommendation is a moot point, as our analysis shows that the focus has already changed.

2. Amount of salary awards

There is no empirical data to support the belief that the size of salary supplements results in improved teaching and learning. Perceptions of the impact of the program on the quality of teaching and learning is much more positive in those districts where salary supplements are not awarded than it is in districts that award salary supplements. In Dade county, the only large county in which all of the funds are given in salary awards and in which the awards are the largest, teachers and administrators report a lower level of impact than in counties that use the funds for materials and equipment.

Our analysis is incomplete, it may be that the existence of salary supplements causes competition that has provided a negative perception of the program for many teachers.

3. Criteria

We are concerned with the basis for this recommendation. It assumes that there is no connection between the optional criteria that each school chooses and improved learning. This assumption may not be correct. There are no data in the state's records or in our study to address this issue.

Based on a review of current literature, and not on any results of our study, we agree that the law should be changed to allow each district to develop alternatives to multiple choice tests. The validity of standardized test scores derived from old norms is very questionable. The "High Stakes Testing" literature would imply that programs that reward teachers and schools based on test scores result in practices that invalidate the scores. We have some indications of that result, but our data is not directly related to the issue.

4. DOE authority

This recommendations is a state procedural issue for which there are no real data other than a report of how the DOE currently operates. As general opinion, we agree with the recommendation and would support a more viable role for the Florida DOE in the monitoring of the Merit Schools Program. Because most districts act entirely independently and have no idea of what other districts are doing and what seems to work well in other districts, this intend should include a cross district exchange and sharing of results.

If this recommendation is to be carried out, though, the legislature must recognize that more funds and staff support

must be provided to the DOE. Some legislators reject that idea because they believe that DOE staffing is in "fat city" and could do much more than they currently do without any increase in funding. Do you have data on that issue?

5. Learning criteria

The recommendation assumes that learning and attitude are independent. There are no data to support that position. We did not study that issue.

We agree with the implication that for some school districts the optional criteria are weak and set up so that it is almost impossible for the schools not to achieve them. However, the impact of the optional criteria is often much greater that meets the eye. Our interview data are testimonial and based on multiple indicators rather than on single simple indicators.

The use of optional criteria is extremely varied by district and by school within district. There is little or no monitoring of the achievement of the criteria.
There needs to be a clearer analysis of the impact that the achievement of the optional criteria are having on the primary goals of improved teaching and learning. There is a need to broaden the range of optional criteria available to each school.

Each building could devise a plan outlining its needs, how it would propose to meet those needs, and how the meeting of those needs could be evaluated.

We agree that school improvement standards (not participation standards) should be measured before and after implementation. Our study shows that this is occurring in many districts already.

This area of work is in great need of development as a strategy for obtaining the results intended by the legislature. It is our impression that people who do not work in schools on a regular basis have no understanding of the importance and impact of many of the optional goals used by some districts.

6. Use of standardized tests

We agree with this recommendation because there is no generally accepted way to use the results of standardized tests for the purposes outlined in the current law. We believe that most of the models currently in use by school districts to select merit schools do not achieve their intended purposes. A mathematical study of this issue is outside the scope of our project and would include an analysis of the validity of test scores based on old norms,

adjustments of scores in schools that have long produced students who achieve above expected levels, adjustments of scores in schools that have high percentages of students who change from year to year, any many related factors.

We did find, though, that school administrators were not unhappy with this requirement, primarily because they were not in a position to provide alternatives to the use of standardized tests other than using the optional criteria. They have grown to live with the use of standardized test scores regardless of their belief in their value and meaning.

7. Eliminate High Schools

We do not support this recommendation. Our data show that there is little difference in the perceived impact of the Merit Schools program across school level; elementary, middle/jr. high, high school.

We feel that making major changes in the program at this time may be premature. There needs to be a greater effort to involve school districts who have been operating the program to come together and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of what they are doing.

If the merit schools program is to be replaced with a program similar to accountability grants, the data suggest that it is just as appropriate at all school levels as it is at the high school level. Perhaps that would be "tossing out the baby with the bath." In general, there is a positive reaction to the merit schools program. Why not work to improve it rather than replace it with another program that would take several years to grow and become effective?

As long as we are dealing with recommendations based on value orientations, consider the following:
The state legislature should require greater formative evaluation and imporvement in the way that districts implement the merit schools program. The program should vary by district. The legislature needs to learn that programs with potential must grow into effectiveness over time, 5 to 10 years or more, and that their constant change of program mandates results in a lowering of school effectiveness and a destruction of the quality of schooling.

APPENDIX F

EXAMPLES OF STATISTICAL MODELS

Attachment E

EXAMPLES OF STATISTICAL MODELS FOR USE IN SELECTING MERITORIOUS SCHOOLS

The following statistical models are provided as illustrations of ways a district might meet the intent of Section 231.532(3)(f), F. S. Student achievement on verbal and quantitative achievement tests is a required component of a district plan, with the additional requirement of at least one of the standards in subsections (3)(f)4.a. through (3)(f)4.d. The plan may also include other district standards which go beyond these minimum requirements. Student achievement on verbal and quantitative tests may be combined into a composite score for determining the schools which will be designated "meritorious." Refer to Scenarios A and B on pages E-2 and E-3 for examples of how this might be done.

The examples included here may be used as models and may also serve to stimulate the design or development of other models that will meet the intent of subsection (3)(f). To establish realistic goals, districts are urged to examine students' previous test performance (from year to year) prior to selecting a method for weighting or combining achievement with other goal categories of the plan. Further, the numerical values used in the following examples are for illustration purposes only and may not be suitable for your district.

The 1986 Legislature deleted from the statute any reference to an "upper quartile" of schools, or to the "too few schools" model, which were part of the program during 1984 and 1985. Therefore, districts are free to design plans which result in the designation of any number of schools as "meritorious" as long as the basic criteria previously described are met. If the district chooses to use statistical procedures to limit the number of meritorious schools to the "upper quartile" this is permissible. However, it is not required. For this reason, the illustrations which follow do not make a distinction between the "upper quartile" and "too few schools" models which were used in previous years.

Method I

Use of a school-anticipated or predicted mean score obtained from the administration of a nationally-normed test with school-oriented ability as a predictor. Students are given an ability test prior to taking the achievement battery. The predicted score for an individual student usually represents the achievement score obtained by other students of similar age, grade, sex, and ability based on the test publisher's national norms. To be considered as having increased student performance, schools should score higher than their mean predicted score by one standard error of estimate or some other band or range of scores determined by the district to be a realistic and appropriate gain in improvement over the school's predicted score. Schools exhibiting increased student performance could then be assigned a point value.

Examples: Method I

Ia. District with four schools of one type, e.g., high schools:

Standard Error of Estimate (SE) = 2.5

	Mean Predicted Score	One SE or District Desired Gain	Criterion	Actual Mean Score	Difference Between Criterion and Actual Score
School 1	55	2.5	57.5	58	+.5
School 2	49	2.5	51.5	58	+6.5
School 3	46	2.5	48.5	48	-.5
School 4	50	2.5	52.5	55	+2.5

MERITORIOUS SCHOOLS SCENARIO A (DISTRICT PLAN)

(For illustration purposes only. All items and point values are hypothetical.)

TYPE OF SCHOOL	REQUIRED TEST CRITERIA		OPTIONAL CATEGORIES													
	VERBAL AND QUANTITATIVE GAIN SCORES	ACTUAL POINTS	OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS --	POINT VALUE	ACTUAL POINTS	PARTICIPATION STANDARDS	POINT VALUE	ACTUAL POINTS	ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS	POINT VALUE	ACTUAL POINTS	DISCIPLINE STANDARDS	POINT VALUE	ACTUAL POINTS	TOTAL
POINT VALUE	20			20			25			15			20		100
High Schools	20		1 There will be an 8% increase in students who score above the minimum standards on the SSAT II on their 1st attempt * 2 There will be a 5% increase in the number of students who score _____ on the SAT or _____ on the ACT	12 8		1 There will be a 15% increase in the number of students enrolled in upper level MATH 5 SCIENCE 5 2 There will be an increase from 22% to 30% of students who enter the school system low 5 3 The school will establish a school advisory committee which will meet six times during the year 5 4 There will be an increase from 1% to 5% of the student body who participate in national math, science, language arts, and vocational contests 5			1 There will be a 5% increase in the number of school PRIDE finalists in district competition 3 2 There will be an increase from 6 students to 10 students who will be awarded grants or scholarships of at least $1,000 1st year value 5 3 There will be an increase from 60% to 80% of graduating seniors in 1988 89 who are employed in the area of vocational training 8			1. For the 1988 89 school year, student attendance will increase by at least 13% 10 2 The dropout rate will decrease from 7% to not more than 3% for the 1988 89 school year 10		
POINT VALUE	10			5			35			8			50		100
Alternative Schools	10		There will be an increase from 32% to 80% of students who successfully pass the national physical fitness test during the 1988 89 school year	5		1 Volunteer hours will increase from 600 hours to 1,200 hours during the 1988 89 school year 9 2 School science fair participation will increase from 5% of the student body to 75% during the 1988 89 school year 15 3 At least 80% of the parents or guardians will visit the school at least two times during the 1988 89 school year 11			None			1. Student attendance will increase from 88% average to 91% average for the 1988 89 school year 20 2. 5% more students in 1988 89 will be placed in regular schools and complete at least two months more than in 1987 88 10 3 Suspensions will decrease by 10% for the 1988 89 school year over the 1987 88 year 20		

All schools which score above 75 total points are meritorious schools

Columns and points for other local district goals and objectives may be added

*Spring administration only

MERITORIOUS SCHOOLS SCENARIO B (RESULTS FOR SIX SCHOOLS)

(For illustration purposes only. All items and point values are hypothetical.)

REQUIRED TEST CRITERIA		OPTIONAL CATEGORIES								ADDITIONAL DISTRICT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES			TOTAL POINTS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	VERBAL AND QUANTITATIVE GAIN SCORE POINTS	OTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS	POINTS	PARTICIPATION STANDARDS*	POINTS Table 1	POINTS Table 4	ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS	POINTS	DISCIPLINE STANDARDS	POINTS	DESCRIPTION	POINTS Table 5	POINTS Table 6	
#1	6	National Physical Fitness Exam (from Table 2 below)	40	Volunteer hours (from Table 3 below)	27	40	None	None	None	NONE	Teacher Attendance (from Table 5 below)	20	5	138
#2	10		10		33	30						50	50	191
#3	4		50	School Science Fair (from Table 4 below)	13	30					Home Visits (from Table 6 below)	20	25	142
#4	10		25		13	0						30	25	153
#5	0		0		47	30						5	5	82
#6	4 (from Table 1 below)		25		27	10						5	25	96

a. There are six elementary schools in the district.
b. The district has elected to exclude achievement and discipline standards from meritorious school competition at the elementary schools.
c. The district has elected to weight each category differently, i.e., verbal and quantitative test scores 0-30 points, participation standards 0-100 points, teacher attendance 0-50, and home visits 0-100.

TABLE 1

Student Gain - Verbal and Quantitative tests

	Mean Predicted Score	Actual Score	Differences	Point Value
School 1	55	58	3	6
School 2	49	58	9	18
School 3	46	48	2	4
School 4	50	55	5	10
School 5	48	45	-3	0
School 6	51	53	2	4

*See example 1b, page F-4, for explanation of table.

TABLE 2

Percent of Students Who Pass the National Physical Fitness Exam

Percent Passing	Point Value
91-100	50
81-90	40
71-80	25
61-70	10
51-60	5
50 and below	0

TABLE 3

Number of Volunteer Hours per Student

Number of Hours	Point Value
0-5	13
6-8	27
9-12	33
13-18	42
19 and over	50

TABLE 4

Percent of Students Participating in School Science Fair

Percent of Participants	Point Value
Less than 25	0
26-35	10
36-45	20
46-55	30
56-65	40
66 and over	50

TABLE 5

Average Teacher Attendance

Days Absent	Point Value
0-1	50
2-3	30
4-5	20
6-7	5
more than 7	0

TABLE 6

Percent of Teachers Making Four Home Visits

Percent	Point Value
80-100	100
60-79	75
40-59	50
20-39	25
10-19	5
below 10	0

Ic. Percent of students exceeding the predicted mean score. Once a predicted mean score is obtained, the percent of students exceeding the predicted score should be determined. For districts with several schools of the same type, e.g., all high schools in the district, those schools could be ranked by percent of students exceeding the predicted mean score as follows:

School 1	97%
School 2	96%
School 3	91%
School 4	85%
School 5	67%
School 6	52%
School 7	50%
School 8	40%
School 9	37%

The schools could be assigned points by several methods. Following is one possible table that could be used to determine the achievement points for each of the nine high schools.

TABLE B

Intervals Percent of Students Exceeding Predicted Mean	Assigned Point Value
95 +	100
90 - 94	95
85 - 89	90
80 - 84	85
75 - 79	80
70 - 74	75
65 - 69	70
60 - 64	65
55 - 59	60
50 - 54	55
etc.	etc.

In this example, Schools 1 and 2 will receive 100 points, School 3 will earn 95 points, and School 4 will receive 90 points, etc. These values can then be combined with weighted values obtained from the other goal categories included in the district's plan to obtain a composite score. The composite score can then be used to determine the meritorious schools.

Id. District with one school:

Predicted Score = 52 Standard Error (SE) = 2.5
Actual Score = 57

The actual score is more than 2.5 points above the predicted score. Hence, this school has met the criterion. A point value could be assigned on the basis of a table developed when the district plan is established. These point values can then be combined with other values obtained from the other components of the district's plan to develop the composite score. An absolute value or cut-off score must then be reached for the school to be determined a meritorious school.

See bold print on page E-1.

Ie. District with three schools, SE = 2.5

	Predicted Mean Score	Actual Mean Score	Difference
School 1	52	55	+3
School 2	54	57	+3
School 3	51	53	+2

Only Schools 1 and 2 have met the criterion because the actual mean for School 3 did not exceed one SE above the predicted mean. Only Schools 1 and 2 would receive points. These points would be combined with points earned in other goal categories to produce a composite score for each school.

Method II

Multivariate regression analysis yielding a mean predicted achievement score for a school. The school should exceed the predicted score by one standard error of estimate (or some other designated band or range of scores established in the district plan), be ranked by some method, and be assigned a point value which could be combined with other weighted goal category values. The regression analysis for each school may include, as independent variables, prior achievement, socioeconomic factors such as free or reduced price lunch, racial-ethnic characteristics, and/or age. The dependent or criterion variable should be student scale scores on any standardized district-approved achievement test(s). Variations of the analysis based on gain scores, grade levels, school characteristics and/or kinds of test(s) may be a part of the regression model. (A discussion and example of a multiple regression analysis is in the Student Assessment publication, The Third and Fifth Grade Predicted Score Report, 1977-78.)

Method III

Student improvement by within-school percentile distribution. A within-school percentile distribution for each grade tested will be developed from the raw or scale scores of students for one year's achievement test and the next year's test, e.g., 1988 to 1989. Students' raw or scale scores on these achievement tests will be converted to a within-school percentile score. Students who improve from one year to the next may be counted, e.g., 10 percentile points at the middle of the percentile range (25th percentile to 75th percentile), 5 percentile points at the ends of the percentile distribution (10th to 25th percentile or 75th percentile to 90th percentile) and 2 percentile points at the very ends of the distribution (0 to 10th percentile and 90th to 99th percentile). These student counts could then be converted to the percent of students improving. A school's improvement criterion could be established at a selected percent of the students showing improvement by this method.

Examples: Method IIIa

			Points Using Table C
School 1	=	75% students improving	40
School 2	=	60% students improving	30
School 3	=	59% students improving	30
School 4	=	58% students improving	30

See bold print on page E-1.

TABLE C

Interval Percent of Students Improving	Assigned Point Values
91 +	50
81 - 90	45
71 - 80	40
61 - 70	35
51 - 60	30
41 - 50	25
31 - 40	20
21 - 30	15
11 - 20	10
1 - 10	5

Using Table C, School 1 earned 40 points and School 2 earned 30 points. These values can be combined with other goal category values to form a composite school score and from which the meritorious schools can be selected.

IIIb. Assume that 60 percent of the students in a school district of "too few" schools of a type improved according to the criteria specified above.

If the plan set a goal that 50 percent of the students should improve, the goal was met. A district could establish a table to assign point values and combine them with results of other goal categories in the district's plan to determine if the school met an absolute criterion established in this plan.

IIIc. District with three schools.

School 1 = 56% students improving
School 2 = 52% students improving
School 3 = 49% students improving

Only Schools 1 and 2 met the criterion of 50 percent improving. School 3 did not reach the 50th percent criterion. A table could be established with points for intervals of percent of students improving. Assigned points for school achievement would then be combined with other district goal values for determining the composite score for each school.

Method IV

Student improvement by national percentile distribution. This approach is the same as Method III, with the exception that the distribution to be used for examining improvement will be the national percentile distribution. Therefore, on a nationally-normed test, the students' percentile scores from test forms appropriate for the grade levels could be compared from one year's performance to another year's performance, e.g., 1988 to 1989, as a measure of improvement.

Method V

Averaging of previous years' nationally-normed achievement mean scores to determine a relative measure of improvement. Districts may choose to average the previous three years' achievement mean scores and combine the related standard deviations to obtain an "average" standard deviation. This analysis could be done by grade. Each grade could then be required, for example, to exceed the previous achievement mean score by one-third of the combined standard deviation for the school to meet the criterion for receiving points. These points would be combined with results of other selected district goals to form a composite score for each

school. (Attachment F contains the formulas and an example of how to determine the combined mean and standard deviations for three years.)

Examples: Method V

Va. Assume that School A, Grade 10, had these data:

	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
10th Grade 1986	250	80	15
10th Grade 1987	225	70	25
10th Grade 1988	275	75	20

Combined mean = 75.17 (See Attachment F-1 for computation of combined mean and standard deviation.)
Combined standard deviation - 20.61
One third of SD = 6.87

In 1989 the tenth grade test results for School A produced a mean of 79.

Seventy-nine is not 6.87 (1/3 of combined SD) above the combined mean of 75.17. However, if School A had a 1988 mean score of 83, it would have reached the criterion. Eighty-three is more than 6.87 points above the combined mean of 75.17. A table of point values could be established and a composite score could be determined.

Vb. Use same method as above, but average the scores for the same students across three years instead of using the same grade three times.

Example: 9th grade 1986
10th grade 1987
11th grade 1988

For this method, a scale score that automatically increases each year would not be appropriate. (Many of the test publishers' K-12 scale scores do automatically increase each year.)

See bold print on page E-1.

APPENDIX G

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

MERIT SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Teachers' Responses To Survey
Salary Supplements vs. Materials Only

BECAUSE OF THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM:

I. SCHOOL CONDITIONS

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

		%D	%U	%A	Num.
a) Student learning has improved.					
	Dade Co	28	20	52	195
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	28	35	37	94
	Materials only	20	30	50	260
b) Teachers devote more hours working for the school.					
	Dade Co	18	15	67	197
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	23	29	49	94
	Materials only	23	21	56	261
c) More student time is used for learning activities.					
	Dade Co	29	24	47	196
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	30	30	40	95
	Materials only	26	23	51	259
d) Teachers use more effective instructional methods.					
	Dade Co	27	26	47	197
p<.004	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	26	27	47	94
	Materials only	14	25	61	256
e) Student attendance is better.					
	Dade Co	28	21	51	195
p<.001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	38	35	27	93
	Materials only	37	34	29	259
f) Teamwork among teachers is better.					
	Dade Co	25	18	57	196
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	27	22	51	95
	Materials only	21	25	54	259

g) Teamwork among teachers and administrators is better.					
	Dade Co	24	21	55	195
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	30	22	48	93
	Materials only	21	27	52	259
h) The instructional materials or equipment is better.					
	Dade Co	39	27	34	196
p<.001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	35	28	37	95
	Materials only	12	16	72	261
i) Students take standardized tests more seriously.					
	Dade Co	31	29	40	197
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	33	21	46	95
	Materials only	35	36	29	260
j) More time is used to teach test taking skills.					
p<.02	Dade Co	17	17	66	197
	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	09	22	69	94
	Materials only	22	23	55	258
k) Teachers require student participation in activities related to merit school goals.					
	Dade Co	12	13	75	196
p<.04	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	15	23	62	95
	Materials only	18	25	57	257
l) Parent participation in school activities is better.					
	Dade Co	38	27	35	197
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	41	24	35	95
	Materials only	28	31	41	257
m) Community pride in the school is better.					
	Dade Co	22	29	49	197
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	20	28	52	94
	Materials only	22	26	52	259

II. TEACHERS ARE MORE INVOLVED IN DECISIONS ABOUT:

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

		%D	%U	%A	Num.
a) instructional methods					
	Dade Co	25	19	56	197
p<.04	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	34	25	41	95
	Materials only	21	20	59	260
b) purchase of instructional resources and equipment					
	Dade Co	28	21	51	197
p<.001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	25	20	55	95
	Materials only	11	11	78	259
c) school policy and procedures					
	Dade Co	34	22	44	197
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	37	31	32	95
	Materials only	28	24	48	260
d) school goals					
	Dade Co	20	15	65	196
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	26	15	59	95
	Materials only	20	20	60	260
e) other grade level or school activities and practices.					
	Dade Co	22	24	54	197
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	27	32	41	95
	Materials only	23	24	53	259

III. THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM:

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

		%D	%U	%A	Num.
a) is fair to all schools.					
	Dade Co	38	24	38	409
p<.003	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	49	26	25	209
	Materials only	25	34	41	511
b) has a positive impact on my school.					
	Dade Co	23	16	61	411
p<.004	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	25	19	56	211
	Materials only	10	18	72	521
c) provides educators a reward for good work.					
	Dade Co	17	13	70	408
p<.001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	26	17	57	210
	Materials only	36	20	44	518
d) has pushed schooling toward trivial learning.					
	Dade Co	52	22	26	406
p<.04	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	46	26	28	209
	Materials only	55	27	18	517
e) promotes practices that diminish the quality of education while test scores increase.					
	Dade Co	56	20	24	405
p<.001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	40	22	38	212
	Materials only	47	29	24	515
f) is very easy, requiring no extra effort.					
	Dade Co	81	07	12	409
p<.003	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	71	14	15	206
	Materials only	61	21	18	515
g) rewards the most improved rather than the highest quality schools.					
	Dade Co	23	32	45	405
p<.01	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	19	25	56	212
	Materials only	20	37	43	514

h) uses test scores that give false information about student learning.					
	Dade Co	38	26	36	405
p<.005	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	23	27	50	208
	Materials only	41	28	31	514
i) uses other school criteria that are important.					
	Dade Co	19	36	45	406
	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	23	36	41	209
n.s.	Materials only	15	36	49	514
j) allows politics to get in the way of true teaching quality awards.					
	Dade Co	39	25	36	409
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	29	31	40	211
	Materials only	40	28	32	517
k) has resulted in wise use of state funds.					
	Dade Co	24	34	42	409
p<.002	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	43	28	29	212
	Materials only	24	30	46	518
l) is a credible program for school improvement.					
	Dade Co	23	20	57	409
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	34	26	40	211
	Materials only	20	25	55	515
o) should be dropped altogether.					
	Dade Co	62	16	22	410
p<.005	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	50	27	23	210
	Materials only	64	20	16	516
p) should be continued, only if modified.					
	Dade Co	28	20	52	398
p<.002	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	16	22	62	210
	Materials only	20	33	47	511
q) should be continued as is.					
	Dade Co	47	21	32	406
p<.001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	66	17	17	207
	Materials only	38	28	34	513

IV. Background Information

a) What term best describes your school:

		%Elem	%HS/JrH	%HS	NUM.
	Dade Co	62	19	19	401
p<.04	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	50	20	30	206
	Materials only	57	18	25	503

c) To your knowledge, for how many years has your school participated in the Merit Schools Program?

		%0	%1	%2	%3	%4	%5	%6+	Num.
p<.001	Dade Co.	1	1	10	19	25	29	15	390
	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	1	2	6	31	20	28	12	190
	Materials only	1	6	16	36	18	15	08	445

d) How many times has your school been a Merit (QUIIP) School?

		%0	%1	%2	%3	%4	%5	%6+	Num.
p<.001	Dade Co.	14	27	26	18	6	8	1	390
	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	19	25	28	19	6	3	0	188
	Materials only	3	17	19	33	15	10	3	442

II. STANDARDIZED TESTS IN MY SCHOOL:

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

		%D	%U	%A	Num.
a) the curricula are designed to teach the content on the test in order to match what is taught and tested.					
	Dade Co	40	21	39	209
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	30	28	42	112
	Materials only	34	30	36	248
b) teachers are <u>prohibited</u> from reviewing test content.					
	Dade Co	35	16	49	210
p<.04	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	32	14	54	113
	Materials only	40	82	38	252
c) items from the tests are used (without modification) on other tests or student exercises.					
	Dade Co	68	19	13	206
p<.05	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	78	15	07	114
	Materials only	70	23	07	250
d) items from the tests are slightly modified, then used on other tests or student exercises.					
	Dade Co	49	19	32	210
p<.03	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	50	25	25	113
	Materials only	40	31	29	247
e) items on the tests are used as models for item format when writing other tests or student exercises.					
	Dade Co	32	22	46	210
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	35	24	41	113
	Materials only	23	30	47	250
f) experienced teachers remember items from the test and focus part of their instruction on those items.					
	Dade Co	31	22	47	210
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	23	29	48	112
	Materials only	24	31	45	251
g) test administration procedures are followed exactly as printed.					
	Dade Co	09	08	83	214
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	11	11	78	115
	Materials only	05	15	80	251

COMPETITION SUPPLEMENT

TEACHERS' RESPONSES

BECAUSE OF THE MERIT SCHOOL (QUIIP) PROGRAM:

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

		%D	%U	%A	Num.
a)	There is a sense of competition among schools.				
	Dade Co.	15	28	57	92
p<.002	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	14	11	75	56
	Materials only	31	20	49	136
b)	The school district promotes a sense of competition among schools.				
	Dade Co.	17	31	52	92
p<.03	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	20	20	60	56
	Materials only	33	23	44	138
c)	Students are aware of a sense of competition.				
	Dade Co.	34	30	36	91
p<.01	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	38	30	32	56
	Materials only	57	20	23	137
d)	Teachers are aware of a sense of competition.				
	Dade Co.	12	17	71	90
p<.001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	13	07	80	56
	Materials only	34	11	55	137
e)	Merit School competition among schools is good.				
	Dade Co.	27	29	44	91
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	36	34	30	56
	Materials only	40	24	36	134
f)	Competition focuses on standardized test scores.				
	Dade Co.	13	14	73	71
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	05	09	86	44
	Materials only	11	21	68	94
g)	Competition focuses on other Merit School criteria.				
	Dade Co.	15	17	68	71
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	14	27	59	44
	Materials only	12	19	69	91
h)	Competition among schools helps to improve student scores on standardized achievement tests.				
	Dade Co.	27	28	45	71
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	25	32	43	44
	Materials only	31	35	34	90

i) Competition among schools helps to improve student academic achievement in general.					
	Dade Co.	21	34	44	70
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	48	32	20	44
	Materials only	41	24	35	91
j) Competition among schools helps to improve student achievement of other important school objectives.					
	Dade Co.	24	24	52	71
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	39	27	34	44
	Materials only	34	23	43	92
k) Competition among schools helps to improve a sense of team cooperation among school employees (administrators, teachers, staff).					
	Dade Co.	23	14	63	70
p<.04	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	41	20	39	44
	Materials only	26	27	47	92

MERIT SCHOOLS PROGRAM
Survey Responses
Principals and Other School Administrators
Salary Supplements vs. Materials Only

BECAUSE OF THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM:

I. SCHOOL CONDITIONS

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

		%D	%U	%A	Num.
a) Student learning has improved.					
	Dade Co	19	28	53	72
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	36	32	32	50
	Materials only	19	27	54	94
b) Teachers devote more hours working for the school.					
	Dade Co	21	24	55	72
p<.0004	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	54	14	32	50
	Materials only	38	31	31	94
c) More student time is used for learning activities.					
	Dade Co	26	25	49	72
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	46	29	25	48
	Materials only	28	31	41	93
d) Teachers use more effective instructional methods.					
	Dade Co	20	35	45	71
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	41	22	37	49
	Materials only	19	24	57	93
e) Student attendance is better.					
	Dade Co	25	28	47	72
p<.0001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	59	29	12	49
	Materials only	45	39	16	94
f) Teamwork among teachers is better.					
	Dade Co	10	14	76	72
p<.001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	34	20	46	50
	Materials only	25	27	48	94
g) Teamwork among teachers and administrators is better.					
	Dade Co	08	18	74	72
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	30	20	50	50
	Materials only	18	26	56	93

h) The instructional materials or equipment is better.					
	Dade Co	25	31	44	72
p<.0001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	50	18	32	50
	Materials only	08	08	86	91
i) Students take standardized tests more seriously.					
	Dade Co	19	25	56	72
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	37	26	37	49
	Materials only	35	35	30	94
j) More time is used to teach test taking skills.					
	Dade Co	11	17	72	71
p<.003	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	19	16	65	49
	Materials only	34	22	44	94
k) Teachers require student participation in activities related to merit school goals.					
	Dade Co	04	06	90	71
p<.001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	27	12	61	49
	Materials only	22	15	63	94
l) Parent participation in school activities is better.					
	Dade Co	27	27	46	71
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	46	26	28	50
	Materials only	36	31	33	93
m) Community pride in the school is better.					
	Dade Co	14	25	61	72
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	32	08	60	50
	Materials only	23	28	49	93
n) Communication among administrators from different schools is better.					
	Dade Co	28	42	30	72
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	57	25	18	49
	Materials only	39	41	20	94
o) Teachers tend to transfer from other schools to schools that often earn merit school awards.					
	Dade Co	55	21	24	71
p<.002	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	76	16	08	50
	Materials only	70	26	04	94

II. TEACHERS ARE MORE INVOLVED IN DECISIONS ABOUT:

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

		%D	%U	%A	Num.
a) instructional methods					
	Dade Co	11	24	65	72
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	37	12	51	49
	Materials only	23	20	57	93
b) purchase of instructional resources and equipment					
	Dade Co	17	25	58	72
p<.0001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	38	06	56	50
	Materials only	07	08	85	93
c) school policy and procedures					
	Dade Co	14	19	67	72
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	40	18	42	50
	Materials only	23	21	56	94
d) school goals					
	Dade Co	10	11	79	70
p<.03	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	28	16	56	50
	Materials only	11	16	73	94
e) other grade level or school activities and practices.					
	Dade Co	08	21	71	72
p<.0004	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	39	16	45	49
	Materials only	16	28	56	94

III. THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM:

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

		%D	%U	%A	Num.
a) is fair to all schools.					
	Dade Co	39	18	42	71
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	52	10	38	50
	Materials only	31	17	52	94
b) has a positive impact on my school.					
	Dade Co	19	10	71	72
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	32	14	54	50
	Materials only	11	09	80	93
c) provides educators a reward for good work.					
	Dade Co	17	10	73	73
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	32	18	50	50
	Materials only	18	15	67	93
d) has pushed schooling toward trivial learning.					
	Dade Co	61	28	11	72
p<.003	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	58	10	32	50
	Materials only	71	18	11	93
e) promotes practices that diminish the quality of education while test scores increase.					
	Dade Co	63	22	15	72
p<.002	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	48	14	38	50
	Materials only	65	24	11	93
f) is very easy, requiring no extra effort.					
	Dade Co	75	14	11	71
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	86	10	04	49
	Materials only	76	15	10	94
g) rewards the most improved rather than the highest quality schools.					
	Dade Co	29	22	49	72
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	36	14	50	50
	Materials only	28	35	37	93

h) uses test scores that give false information about student learning.					
	Dade Co	44	28	28	72
p<.008	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	42	14	44	50
	Materials only	56	28	16	92
i) uses other school criteria that are important.					
	Dade Co	14	35	51	72
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	22	24	54	50
	Materials only	15	17	67	92
j) allows politics to get in the way of true teaching quality awards.					
	Dade Co	56	24	20	71
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	56	20	24	50
	Materials only	61	17	22	93
k) has resulted in wise use of state funds.					
	Dade Co	15	33	52	72
p<.0001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	46	28	26	50
	Materials only	14	31	55	93
l) is a credible program for school improvement.					
	Dade Co	17	21	62	71
p<.005	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	42	20	38	50
	Materials only	20	13	67	93
m) requires an administrator to devote more time to leading school activities.					
	Dade Co	25	20	55	71
p<.04	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	54	14	32	50
	Materials only	38	19	43	93
n) results in competition that has corrupted schools.					
	Dade Co	69	16	15	71
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	67	12	21	49
	Materials only	77	17	06	93

o) should be dropped altogether.

	Dade Co	68	14	18	72
p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	43	31	26	49
	Materials only	72	14	14	93

p) should be continued, only if modified.

	Dade Co	45	28	27	71
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	36	26	38	50
	Materials only	47	20	33	90

q) should be continued as is.

	Dade Co	30	21	49	71
p<.004	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	62	12	26	50
	Materials only	33	17	50	93

IV. Background Information

a) What term best describes your school:

	%Elem	%HS/JrH	%HS	NUM.
Dade Co	64	22	14	72
Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	42	30	28	50
Materials only	62	15	23	89

c) To your knowledge, for how many years has your school participated in the Merit Schools Program?

	%0	%1	%2	%3	4%	%5	%6+	Num.
Dade Co	0	0	4	15	20	41	20	70
Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	0	4	2	20	30	30	14	50
Materials only	1	3	9	37	25	19	6	90

d) How many times has your school been a Merit (QUIIP) School?

	%0	%1	%2	3%	%4	%5	%6+	Num.
Dade Co	14	23	16	21	7	16	3	70
Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	26	26	26	10	10	0	2	50
Materials only	7	8	13	39	21	9	3	90

COMPETITION SUPPLEMENT
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' RESPONSES

BECAUSE OF THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM:

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

			%D	%U	%A	Num.
a)	There is a sense of competition among schools.					
		Dade Co.	17	18	65	69
	p<.0005	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	26	06	68	47
		Materials only	48	11	41	88
b)	The school district promotes a sense of competition among schools.					
		Dade Co.	15	22	63	68
	p<.0001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	38	09	53	47
		Materials only	50	18	32	88
c)	Students are aware of a sense of competition.					
		Dade Co.	28	32	40	69
	p<.001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	38	26	36	47
		Materials only	64	21	15	88
d)	Teachers are aware of a sense of competition.					
		Dade Co.	13	16	71	69
	p<.0001	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	19	06	75	47
		Materials only	42	18	40	88
e)	Merit School competition among schools is good.					
		Dade Co.	16	25	59	69
	p<.008	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	36	28	36	47
		Materials only	43	30	27	87
f)	Competition focuses on standardized test scores.					
		Dade Co.	16	12	72	57
	n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	08	03	89	37
		Materials only	15	15	70	46
g)	Competition focuses on other Merit School criteria.					
		Dade Co.	11	18	71	56
	n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	27	14	59	37
		Materials only	22	17	61	46
h)	Competition among schools helps to improve student scores on standardized achievement tests.					
		Dade Co.	22	18	60	57
	p<.02	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	19	41	40	37
		Materials only	35	35	30	46
i)	Competition among schools helps to improve student academic achievement in general.					
		Dade Co.	25	19	56	57
	n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	41	27	32	37
		Materials only	37	26	37	46

j) Competition among schools helps to improve student achievement of other important school objectives.					
	Dade Co.	18	19	63	57
p<.04	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	38	24	38	37
	Materials only	30	33	37	46
k) Competition among schools helps to improve a sense of team cooperation among school employees (administrators, teachers, staff).					
	Dade Co.	19	11	70	57
n.s.	Other Co. w/ Salary Supp.	27	19	54	37
	Materials only	26	17	57	46

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO SURVEY INSTRUMENTS:
Teachers vs School Administrators

BECAUSE OF THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM:

I. SCHOOL CONDITIONS

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

		%D	%U	%A	Num.
a) Student learning has improved.					
	Teachers	24	27	49	549
n.s.	Administrators	23	28	49	216
b) Teachers devote more hours working for the school.					
	Teachers	21	20	59	552
p<.001	Administrators	36	25	39	216
c) More student time is used for learning activities.					
	Teachers	28	25	47	550
n.s.	Administrators	31	29	40	213
d) Teachers use more effective instructional methods.					
	Teachers	21	26	53	547
n.s.	Administrators	25	27	48	213
e) Student attendance is better.					
	Teachers	33	30	37	547
p<.02	Administrators	41	33	26	215
f) Teamwork among teachers is better.					
	Teachers	23	22	55	550
n.s.	Administrators	22	21	57	216
g) Teamwork among teachers and administrators is better.					
	Teachers	24	24	52	547
n.s.	Administrators	18	22	60	215

h) The instructional materials or equipment is better.					
	Teachers	25	22	53	552
n.s.	Administrators	24	17	59	213
i) Students take standardized tests more seriously.					
	Teachers	33	31	36	552
n.s.	Administrators	30	30	40	215
j) More time is used to teach test taking skills.					
	Teachers	18	21	61	549
n.s.	Administrators	23	19	58	214
k) Teachers require student participation in activities related to merit school goals.					
	Teachers	15	21	64	548
$p<.01$	Administrators	17	11	72	214
l) Parent participation in school activities is better.					
	Teachers	34	28	38	549
n.s.	Administrators	35	29	36	214
m) Community pride in the school is better.					
	Teachers	21	28	51	550
n.s.	Administrators	22	22	56	215
n) Communication among administrations from different schools is better.					
	Administrators	40	37	23	215
o) Teachers tend to transfer from other schools to schools that often earn merit school awards.					
	Administrators	66	22	12	215

II. TEACHERS ARE MORE INVOLVED IN DECISIONS ABOUT:

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

		%D	%U	%A	Num.
a) instructional methods					
	Teachers	25	20	55	552
n.s.	Administrators	22	20	58	214
b) purchase of instructional resources and equipment					
	Teachers	20	16	65	551
n.s.	Administrators	18	13	69	215
c) school policy and procedures					
	Teachers	31	25	44	552
p<.01	Administrators	24	20	56	216
d) school goals					
	Teachers	21	17	62	551
p<.05	Administrators	14	15	71	214
e) other grade level or school activities and practices.					
	Teachers	23	25	52	551
n.s.	Administrators	19	23	58	215

III. THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM:

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

		%D	%U	%A	Num.
a) is fair to all schools.					
	Teachers	34	29	37	1126
p<.001	Administrators	39	16	45	215
b) has a positive impact on my school.					
	Teachers	17	18	65	1143
p<.02	Administrators	19	10	71	215
c) provides educators a reward for good work.					
	Teachers	27	17	56	1136
p<.05	Administrators	21	14	65	215
d) has pushed schooling toward trivial learning.					
	Teachers	52	25	23	1132
p<.004	Administrators	65	19	16	215
e) promotes practices that diminish the quality of education while test scores increase.					
	Teachers	49	24	27	1132
p<.005	Administrators	61	21	18	215
f) is very easy, requiring no extra effort.					
	Teachers	70	14	16	1130
p<.03	Administrators	77	14	09	214
g) rewards the most improved rather than the highest quality schools.					
	Teachers	21	33	46	1131
p<.01	Administrators	30	26	44	215
h) uses test scores that give false information about student learning.					
	Teachers	37	27	36	1127
p<.004	Administrators	49	25	26	214

i) uses other school criteria that are important.					
	Teachers	18	36	46	1129
p<.002	Administrators	16	25	59	214
j) allows politics to get in the way of true teaching quality awards.					
	Teachers	38	28	34	1137
p<.001	Administrators	58	20	22	214
k) has resulted in wise use of state funds.					
	Teachers	27	31	42	1139
n.s.	Administrators	22	31	47	215
l) is a credible program for school improvement.					
	Teachers	24	23	53	1135
n.s.	Administrators	24	18	58	214
m) requires an administrator to devote more time to leading school activities.					
	Administrators	37	18	45	214
n) results in competition that has corrupted schools.					
	Teachers	57	25	18	1134
p<.001	Administrators	72	16	12	213
o) should be dropped altogether.					
	Teachers	61	20	19	1136
p<.03	Administrators	64	18	18	214
p) should be continued, only if modified.					
	Teachers	22	26	52	1119
p<.001	Administrators	44	24	32	211
q) should be continued as is.					
	Teachers	46	24	30	1126
p<.001	Administrators	39	17	44	214

IV. Background Information

a) What term best describes your school:

		%Elem	%HS/JrH	%HS	NUM.
	Teachers	58	18	24	1110
n.s.	Administrators	58	21	21	211

c) To your knowledge, for how many years has your school participated in the Merit Schools Program?

		%0	%1	%2	3%	%4	%5	%6+	Num.
p<.03	Teachers	1	3	12	28	21	23	12	1025
	Administrators	1	2	6	26	25	28	12	210

d) How many times has your school been a Merit (QUIIP) School?

		%0	%1	%2	3%	%4	%5	%6+	Num.
n.s.	Teachers	10	22	23	24	11	08	02	1022
	Administrators	14	17	17	27	14	09	02	210

COMPETITION SUPPLEMENT

BECAUSE OF THE MERIT SCHOOLS (QUIIP) PROGRAM:

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

			%D	%U	%A	Num.
a)	There is a sense of competition among schools.					
		Teachers	22	21	57	284
	p<.01	Administrators	32	13	55	204
b)	The school district promotes a sense of competition among schools.					
		Teachers	26	24	50	286
	p<.03	Administrators	36	17	47	203
c)	Students are aware of a sense of competition.					
		Teachers	46	25	29	284
	n.s.	Administrators	46	26	28	204
d)	Teachers are aware of a sense of competition.					
		Teachers	23	12	65	283
	n.s.	Administrators	32	28	40	203
e)	Merit School competition among schools is good.					
		Teachers	35	28	37	281
	n.s.	Administrators	32	28	40	203
f)	Competition focuses on standardized test scores.					
		Teachers	10	16	74	209
	n.s.	Administrators	14	11	76	140
g)	Competition focuses on other Merit School criteria.					
		Teachers	14	20	66	206
	n.s.	Administrators	19	16	65	139
h)	Competition among schools helps to improve student scores on standardized achievement tests.					
		Teachers	28	32	40	205
	n.s.	Administrators	26	29	45	140
i)	Competition among schools helps to improve student academic achievement in general.					
		Teachers	36	29	35	205
	n.s.	Administrators	33	24	43	140
j)	Competition among schools helps to improve student achievement of other important school objectives.					
		Teachers	32	24	44	207
	n.s.	Administrators	27	25	48	140
k)	Competition among schools helps to improve a sense of team cooperation among school employees (administrators, teachers, staff).					
		Teachers	28	21	51	206
	n.s.	Administrators	24	15	61	140

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS' QUESTIONNAIRE

A = agree
U = undecided
D = disagree

	%D	%U	%A	Num.
1. Because of the merit schools program, principals and teachers are interacting to a greater extent on a wide range of decisions.	42	15	42	26
2. The merit schools program has added little to the activities and behaviors that teachers and principals typically perform in our district.	54	15	31	26
3. The merit schools program is achieving its primary goal of improving instructional practices in our district.	31	23	46	26
4. Overall, there is a positive feeling among most teachers toward the Merit Schools Program.	19	15	46	26
5. Because of the pressure caused by the consequences of the standardized test scores that are part of the Merit Schools Program, inappropriate procedures or methods are used by teachers and principals.	77	08	15	26
6. Our district's merit school program is working very well.	15	23	62	26
7. District testing experts believe the statistical model that interprets the standardized test part of the merit schools criteria is a valid model.	23	19	58	26
8. There have been few problems with implementing the merit schools program.	27	04	69	26
9. Transfers by teachers to merit schools have increased since the merit school program has begun.	84	10	06	25
10. The merit schools program:				
a. should be dropped	45	10	45	20
b. should be kept, if modified	14	36	50	14
c. should continue in its present form.	33	11	56	18

11. Rank order the benefits of the Merit Schools Program.

	%1	%2	%3	%4	%5	Num
a. The additional dollars it provides to teachers and/or schools	65	12	00	12	11	26
b. The increased interaction between teachers and principals	16	20	20	24	20	26
c. The improvement in standardized test scores	04	12	40	36	08	25
d. The increased community involvement	04	00	24	28	44	25
e. The increased school pride	19	50	19	04	08	26

APPENDIX H

ANALYSIS OF ATTITUDE, INSTRUCT, & TEAMWRK INDICES

TABLE 1

TEACHER A

ATTITUDE INDEX

MEANS

	School Level			
	Elementary	Middle/Jr. High	High	Marginals
District				
Dade	32.4	36.1	31.9	32.9
Salary Supplements	30.5	27.3	28.3	29.3
Materials	34.6	33.2	32.3	33.8
Marginals	33.1	32.9	31.4	

Significance of F:
District .001
School Level .297

Interaction Effect: .171
Pooled Standard Deviation: 9.18

TABLE 2

TEACHER B

ATTITUDE INDEX

MEANS

	School Level			
	Elementary	Middle/Jr. High	High	Marginals
District				
Dade	33.8	33.7	35.1	34.0
Salary Supplements	30.7	30.4	30.5	30.6
Materials	33.7	34.1	32.5	33.5
Marginals	33.2	33.2	32.7	

Significance of F:
District .005
School Level .969

Interaction Effect: .806
Pooled Standard Deviation: 9.08

TABLE 3

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

ATTITUDE INDEX

MEANS

	School Level			
	Elementary	Middle/Jr. High	High	Marginals
District				
Dade	33.7	41.4	34.4	35.5
Salary Supplements	29.0	30.9	36.3	31.7
Materials	36.4	37.9	37.8	36.9
Marginals	34.0	37.1	36.7	

Significance of F:
District .003
School Level .030

Interaction Effect: .180
Pooled Standard Deviation: 9.26

TABLE 4

TEACHER A

INSTRUCT INDEX

MEANS

	School Level			
	Elementary	Middle/Jr. High	High	Marginals
District				
Dade	13.1	13.5	12.4	13.0
Salary Supplements	12.9	12.3	11.1	12.3
Materials	14.6	14.1	13.8	14.3
Marginals	13.7	13.5	12.8	

Significance of F:
District .000
School Level .072

Interaction Effect: .769
Pooled Standard Deviation: 3.60

TABLE 5

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

INSTRUCT INDEX

MEANS

	School Level			
	Elementary	Middle/Jr. High	High	Marginals
District				
Dade	12.9	13.9	11.4	13.0
Salary Supplements	11.4	8.8	11.6	10.8
Materials	13.1	15.1	14.1	13.6
Marginals	12.7	12.7	12.7	

Significance of F:
District .000
School Level .769

Interaction Effect: .076
Pooled Standard Deviation: 3.84

TABLE 6

TEACHER A

TEAMWRK INDEX

MEANS

	School Level			
	Elementary	Middle/Jr. High	High	Marginals
District				
Dade	23.3	24.8	21.9	23.3
Salary Supplements	23.1	20.7	19.4	21.7
Materials	24.8	24.9	23.7	24.6
Marginals	23.9	24.0	22.3	

Significance of F:
District .002
School Level .069

Interaction Effect: .418
Pooled Standard Deviation: 6.54

TABLE 7

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

TEAMWRK INDEX

MEANS

	School Level			
	Elementary	Middle/Jr. High	High	Marginals
District				
Dade	25.8	27.7	23.0	26.0
Salary Supplements	22.2	18.5	21.9	21.1
Materials	24.3	27.5	25.2	24.9
Marginals	24.5	24.8	23.6	

Significance of F:
District .003
School Level .030

Interaction Effect: .180
Pooled Standard Deviation: 6.61

APPENDIX I

IMPACT OF SOCIOECONOMIC LEVEL AND MINORITY MEMBERSHIP PATTERNS OF MERIT SCHOOLS

Patterns of Awarded Schools By County
Based on Fall 1989 School District Reports

Very Small and Small County School Districts

County	Pattern		
Baker	1 High School		won 2 times
	1 Middle School		won 3 times
	2 Elementary Schools	a:	won 2 times
		b:	won 3 times
Gulf	2 Jr/Sn High Schools	a:	won 2 of 4 times
		b:	won 3 of 4 times
	3 Elementary Schools	a:	won 3 of 4 times
		b:	won 3 of 4 times
		c:	won 2 of 4 times
Madison	All participating schools won every year.		
Monroe	3 High Schools	a:	won 4 of 5 times
		b:	won 2 of 5 times mid range SES
		c:	won 4 of 5 times
	1 Middle School		won 4 of 5 times
	8 Elementary Schools		participating elem. schools have won 4 of 5 or 5 of 5 times
Nassau	12 schools: most schools have won nearly every time they participated, except for two schools. One H.S. and one Middle School, both in the mid range SES for the district, have won only once.		
Putnam	3 High Schools:		two have won 2 of 5 times one has won 1 of 5 times (the lower SES of the three)
	4 Middle Schools:		two have won 2 or 3 of 5 times two have won 0 of 5 times (one has the lowest SES)
	8 Elementary Schools:		one has won 3 of 5 times (lower SES) two have won 2 of 5 times three have won 1 of 5 times two have won 0 of 5 times (both in the mid-range of SES)

Patterns of Awarded Schools By County
Based on Fall 1989 School District Reports
(continued)

Very Small and Small County School Districts (continued)

County	Pattern	
Sumpter	2 High Schools: 2 Middle Schools 4 Elementary Schools	both have never won one has won 1 time three have won 1 time One has won 2 times
Suwannee	2 High Schools	one has won 1 time one has won 2 times
	1 Middle School	has won 2 times
	2 Elementary Schools	one has won 2 times one has won 3 times
Union	3 Schools	all three have won at least 1 time (information incomplete)
Wakulla	5 Schools	all have won at least once (district participated two times)
Washington	2 High Schools	a: won 4 of 5 times b: won 5 of 5 times
	2 Middle Schools	a: won 4 of 5 times b: won 4 of 5 times
	2 Elementary Schools	a: won 4 of 5 times b: won 3 of 5 times

Patterns of Awarded Schools By County
Based on Fall 1989 School District Reports

Moderately Small County School Districts

County	Pattern
Bay	3 High Schools each has won 1 of 4 times
	7 Middle Schools four have won 2 of 4 times (SES rank: 3, 5, 6, 7) (% minority rank: 4, 5, 6, 7)
	one has won 1 of 4 times (upper SES) (SES rank : 1) (% minority rank: 3)
	two have not won (mid and upper SES) (SES rank : 2, 4) (% minority rank: 1, 2)
	17 Elementary Schools (for which data was available)

Times won	Rank in SES	Rank in % minority
4 (2 Sch)	3, 5	4, 9
3 (3 Sch)	2, 7, 17	6, 11.5, 15
2 (8 Sch)	6, 8, 10, 11 12, 13.5, 15, 16	1.5, 1.5, 3, 7 11.5, 11.5, 16, 17
1 (2 Sch)	1, 13.5	8, 11.5
0 (2 Sch)	4, 9	5, 14

Patterns of Awarded Schools By County
Based on Fall 1989 School District Reports

Moderately Small County School Districts
(continued)

Lake

7 High Schools
3 have won 1 time
(SES rank: 1, 6, 7) (% minority rank: 1, 2, 7)

4 have not won
(SES rank: 2, 3, 4, 5) (% minor. rank: 3, 4.5, 4.5, 6)

8 Middle Schools
3 have won 1 time
(SES rank: 1, 5, 8) (% minority rank: 3, 7, 8)

5 have not won
(SES rank: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7) (% minority rank: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6)

17 Elementary Schools for which data was available
4 have won 2 times
9 have won 1 time
4 have not won

Times won	Rank in SES	Rank in % minority
2	5.5, 7.5, 7.5, 13	1, 5, 8.5, 16,
1	2.5, 2.5, 4, 5.5, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17	2, 3, 6, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17
0	1, 9, 12, 15	4, 8.5, 10, 13

Leon

5 High Schools 4 have won 3 times (SES rank: 1, 2, 3, 4)
(% minority rank: 1, 2, 3, 4)

1 has won 1 time (SES rank: 5)
(% minority rank: 5)

6 Middle Schools 2 have won 3 times (SES rank: 2.5 and 4)
(% minority rank: 2 and 5.5)

4 have won 2 times (SES rank: 1, 2.5, 5, 6)
(% minority rank: 1, 3, 4, 5.5)

20 Elementary Schools: 13 have won 3 times
6 have won 2 times
1 has won 1 time

Times won	Rank in SES	Rank in % minority
3	1, 2.5 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 11, 12.5, 12.5, 14, 17,	2, 3, 5, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 11, 12, 13, 14, 16,
2	2.5, 10, 16, 18, 19, 20	1, 5, 17, 18, 19, 20
1	15	15

Patterns of Awarded Schools By County
Based on Fall 1989 School District Reports

Moderately Small County School Districts
(continued)

Marion

5 High Schools
2 have won 1 time
(SES rank: 1, 2.5) (% minority rank: 3, 4)

3 have not won
(SES rank: 2.5, 4.5, 4.5) (% minority rank: 1, 2, 5)

6 Middle Schools
4 have won 2 times
(SES rank: 1, 2, 3, 6) (% minority rank: 1, 3, 4, 6)
(SES rank: 3) (% minority rank: 3)

1 has not won
(SES rank: 1) (% minority rank: 1)

13 Elementary Schools for which data was available
6 have won 2 times
4 have won 1 time
3 have not won

Times won	Rank in SES	Rank in % minority
2	2, 2, 5, 7, 13, 15	1, 3, 3, 5, 6, 13
1	2, 5, 9, 12	3, 7, 11, 12
0	8, 10, 11	8, 9, 10

Patterns of Awarded Schools By County
Based on Fall 1989 School District Reports

Large and Moderate Sized School Districts

Brevard 10 High Schools

1 has won 4 times
2 have won 3 times
1 has won 2 times
4 have won 1 time
2 have not won

Times won	Rank in SES	Rank in % minority
3-4	2, 4.5, 4.5	1, 2.5, 8
1-2	1, 3, 6, 8, 9.5	2.5, 4.5, 4.5, 6, 10
0	7, 9.5	7, 9

13 Middle Schools

2 have won 4 times
1 has won 3 times
1 has won 2 times
4 have won 1 time
5 have not won

Times won	Rank in SES	Rank in % minority
3-4	1, 2, 3	1, 2.5, 4.5
1-2	6.5, 6.5, 10.5, 12, 13	2.5, 7, 11, 12, 13
0	4, 5, 8, 9, 10.5,	4.5, 6, 8, 9, 10

45 Elementary Schools

3 have won 4 or 5 times
7 have won 3 times
9 have won 2 times
9 have won 1 time
17 have not won

Number of Schools in Each Group

Times won	% Free or Reduced Lunch			% Minority		
	0-19	20- 39	40 +	0-9	10-19	20+
4-5	2	1			3	
3	3	4		1	4	1
2	3	4	2	2	5	2
1	2	4	3	3	3	3
0	4	8	5	3	8	6

Large and Moderate Sized School Districts
(continued)

Dade 24 High Schools 6 have won 3,4, or 5 times
1 has won 2 times
4 have won 1 time
13 have not won

Times won	Number in Free or Reduced Lunch 0-9%	10-19%	20% +	Number in % minority 0- 74%	75-89%	90% +
0	2	7	4	3	3	7
1 or 2	1	4	0	2	2	1
3, 4, or 5	4	2	0	4	1	1

47 Middle Schools 8 have won 3,4, or 5 times
22 have won 1 or 2 times
17 have not won

Times won	Number in Free or Reduced Lunch 0-34%	35-54%	55% +	Number in % minority 0- 74%	75-89%	90% +
0	2	7	8	5	5	7
1 or 2	10	6	6	9	6	7
3, 4, or 5	2	2	4	0	2	6

179 Elementary Schools 21 have won 3, 4, or 5 times
30 have won 2 times
51 have won 1 time
77 have not won

Times won	Number in % Free or Reduced Lunch 0-39%	40-59%	60+ %	Number in % Minority 0-74%	75-89%	90% +
3, 4, or 5	10 (19%)	2 (5%)	9 (10%)	10 (17%)	4 (10%)	7 (9%)
2	4 (8%)	5 (13%)	21 (24%)	5 (9%)	4 (10%)	21 (26%)
1	12 (23%)	13 (33%)	26 (30%)	16 (28%)	9 (23%)	26 (32%)
0	26 (50%)	20 (50%)	31 (36%)	27 (47%)	23 (58%)	27 (33%)
	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)

Patterns of Awarded Schools By County
Based on Fall 1989 School District Reports

Large and Moderate Sized School Districts
(continued)

Orange 10 High Schools 1 has won 2 times
6 have won 1 time
3 have not won

Times won	Rank in SES	Rank in % minority
2	6.5	4
1	1, 3.5, 3.5, 3.5, 6.5 8	1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10
0	3.5, 9.5, 9.5	5, 7, 8

16 Middle Schools 14 have won 2 times
2 have won 1 time

SES rank of 1 time winners: 13, 14
% minority rank: 14, 15

72 Elementary Schools 53 have won 2 times
12 have won 1 time
7 have not won

Times won	Number in % Free or Reduced Lunch			Number in % Minority		
	0-30%	31-50%	51+ %	1-25%	26-50%	51% +
2	21	16	16	20	19	14
1	1	4	7	2	3	7
0	4	2	1	3	2	2

Large and Moderate Sized School Districts
(continued)

Pasco 6 High Schools
1 has won 4 times
2 have won 3 times
3 have won 2 times

Times won	Rank in SES	Rank in % minority
4	5	6
3	2, 4	2, 5
2	1. 3.5, 3.5	1, 3, 4

7 Middle Schools
2 have won 3 times
0 has won 2 times
3 has won 1 times
2 have not won

Times won	Rank in SES	Rank in % minority
3	1, 4	1, 7
2		
1	2, 4, 6	2.5, 5, 7
0	4, 7	2, 6

23 Elementary Schools
8 have won 2 times
7 have won 1 time
8 have not won

Times won	SES Rank	% Minority Gp. 0-9%	10-19%	20% +
2	3, 5, 7.5, 10, 11, 13, 17, 20	4	2	2
1	1, 2, 6, 9, 13, 13, 21	6	0	1
0	4, 7.5, 15.5, 15.5, 18, 19, 22, 23	7	1	

Large and Moderate Sized School Districts
(continued)

Seminole 6 High Schools 3 have won 1 time
3 have not won

Times won	Rank in SES	Rank in % minority
1	2.5, 4, 6	2, 3, 6
0	1, 2.5, 5	1, 4, 5

9 Middle Schools 4 have won 2 times
4 have won 1 time
1 has not won

Times won	Rank in SES	Rank in % minority
2	1, 4.5, 7, 9	3, 6, 8, 9
1	2, 3, 4.5, 6	1, 2, 4, 5,
0	8	7

27 Elementary Schools 8 have won 2 times
10 have won 1 time
9 have not won

Times won	Number in % Free or Reduced Lunch			Number in % Minority		
	0-15%	16-30%	31+ %	1-20%	21-40%	41% +
2	2	3	3	3	4	1
1	5	3	2	7	1	2
0	2	5	2	4	4	1

Large and Moderate Sized School Districts
(continued)

Volusia 6 High Schools 1 has won 3 times
1 has won 2 times
4 have won 1 time

Times won	Rank in SES	Rank in % minority
3	1.5	3
2	5	6
1	1.5, 3.5, 3.5, 6	1, 2, 4, 5

8 Middle Schools 1 has won 3 times
4 have won 2 times
2 has won 1 times
1 has not won

Times won	Rank in SES	Rank in % minority
3	5	1
2	1.5, 1.5, 4, 7.5	2.5, 2.5, 5, 7
1	3, 7.5	4, 8
0	6	6

35 Elementary Schools 10 have won 3 times
12 have won 2 time
4 have won 1 time
9 have not won

Times won	Number in % Free or Reduced Lunch			Number in % Minority		
	0-29%	30-59%	60+ %	1-15%	16-30%	31% +
3	7	3	0	5	6	0
2	4	7	1	6	2	3
1	2	2	0	1	1	2
0	1	3	5	1	3	5

END

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